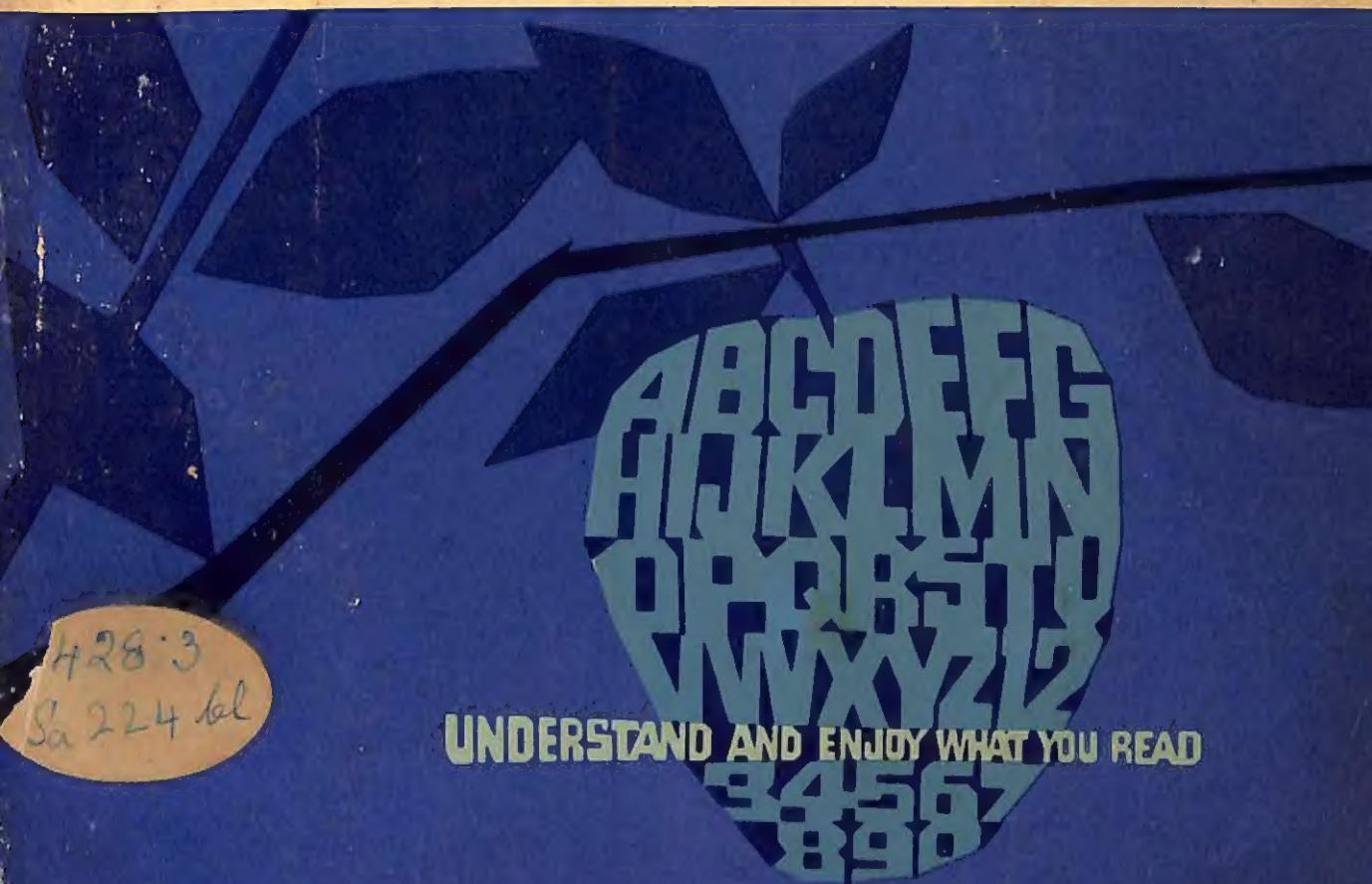


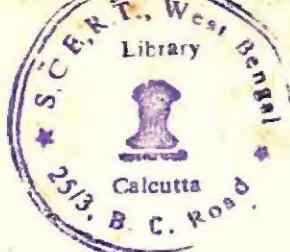
Adrian B. Sanford  
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THE MACMILLAN



# Reading Comprehension





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## JUST A MOMENT!

First, do not write in this book. Write on a separate piece of paper or in your notebook.

Second, try every exercise! Don't be afraid of making mistakes. You can learn from your mistakes.

Third, cover the answer key with a card or paper before you start an exercise.

Fourth, check each answer before going on to the next question. If you make a mistake, try to find out why. If you can't see why you made the mistake, ask your teacher to help you.



Did you ever receive a postcard from a friend saying, "Having wonderful time. Wish you were here."

Did you ever take a trip and write your friends, "Having lots of fun. There are so many things to do!"

You were glad to receive the postcard.

Your friends were happy to hear you were having fun. But they still didn't know very much. They still had a lot of questions they wanted to ask. Did you go swimming? Was the weather warm and sunny? Did you climb a mountain or see a bear?

In the same way, in all your reading, you must look for the important details to find out what is really going on. You must watch for all the little ideas to understand what the writer is really saying.

As you learn to read more easily, you will be able to see what each sentence is telling you. You will be able to follow the ideas without any difficulty from sentence to sentence and from paragraph to paragraph.

Reading is an activity that you will be doing throughout your life. Whether you become a mechanic, a mountain climber, a teacher, or a housewife, you will have to read a great many things. This book will help you to be a better reader.

# Understanding What Words Mean



One after the other, sentences march across the printed pages of books, newspapers, magazines—everthing you read. You understand these sentences because you agree with other people on what the words mean and how they are used.

If you think about the different meanings of some words, you realize that, with the combination of words in sentences, there are millions of possible meanings. The possibilities are almost without end. This is the miracle of language. Using only about 600,000 English words, we can make meanings and ideas many times that number.

Think of a word like *run* and of all the meanings the word has. Of course you think that a person runs or an animal runs. But what about a *run* in a silk stocking? Or have you ever heard of a *run* on the stock market, when a great many people rush to buy or sell stock? Have you heard of a *run* in a river or a stream—the part that rushes fast through a narrow place?

There are other meanings of the word *run*. No doubt you can think of some. Ask your friends to think of other meanings. You could make quite a collection. A dictionary will show you some meanings you may not have known.

Because most words have more than one meaning, you must be able to decide what meaning the writer had in mind when he used a certain word. See if you can do this in the following practice on the meanings of words.

## PRACTICE

A. Read each sentence in the group below. Pick the correct meaning of the word in italics.

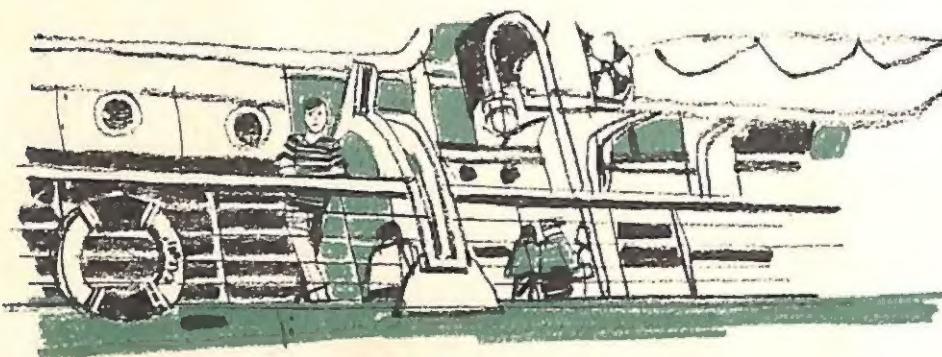
1. A *draft* caught up the particles of dust and danced them around the room.  
a. current of air b. rough copy c. selection of persons to serve in the armed forces 1. a
2. "Here is a *draft* of the bill," the Senator stated.  
"I hope you approve of my ideas."  
a. current of air b. rough copy c. selection of persons to serve in the armed forces 2. b

If you are having difficulty choosing the correct meaning, you might try the following suggestion. Mentally remove the word in italics from the sentence. In its place put a meaning. Read the sentence now and see if it makes sense using that meaning. If it doesn't, try another meaning. Now go ahead and finish this exercise.

3. *Swiss Family Robinson* was on the same *bill* with *The Wizard of Oz*.  
a. piece of paper money b. proposed law  
c. theater program 3. c
4. The searchers *combed* the countryside for the missing boy.  
a. rolled over b. searched through c. took out the tangles in 4. b
5. After dinner the two couples went to the *club* to dance.  
a. group of people b. heavy stick of wood used as a weapon c. building used by a certain group of people 5. c

The meanings of words come from our use of them. A word means only what we all agree it should mean. If suddenly everyone decided that the word *cat* really meant "dog," then it would mean just that. We would have to invent some other word to mean "cat."

Clues to the meaning of a particular word in a sentence come from the other words in the sentence. We call the sentence, or the other words around the particular word, the *context*. The context helps to give the word its meaning. For example:



Arthur read two pages in the beginning of the book;  
then he let his eyes close and his head nod.

Arthur asked his travel agent to book passage  
on the President Cleveland for a trip to the Orient.

The word *book* is used in both sentences. Does it mean the same in the second sentence as in the first? No, of course it doesn't. In the second, it means to reserve a place or get a ticket. The other words in the second sentence show you that *book* has something to do with traveling, not reading.

You can see that the other words in a sentence help to give a word its meaning. Can you think of some words that change their meaning when placed in different contexts?

**B.** In this practice you are given a word and four meanings of that word. Below the definitions you will see four sentences, each one using the word. Choose the letter for the meaning of the word in that sentence.

| Word   | Meanings   |
|--|--|
| <i>march</i> :   | a. a long, hard walk      c. distance marched<br>b. music for marching    d. advance |
| 1. The weary soldiers thought that the <i>march</i> back to their own lines would never end.               | 1. a   |
| 2. The strains of a stirring <i>march</i> blared across the parade grounds.                                | 2. b   |
| 3. Down through the years the <i>march</i> of history has brought new wonders and new problems to mankind. | 3. d   |
| 4. "Today's five-mile <i>march</i> was worse than yesterday's," moaned the footsore private.               | 4. c   |

| Word          | Meanings  |
|---------------|---|
| <i>line</i> : | a. mark with lines      c. arrange in a line                              |
|               | b. cover with lines      d. form a line                                   |
| 5.            | When the bell rang, the children <i>lined</i> up in front of their rooms. |
| 5. d          |   |
| 6.            | Mr. Grubb's face was <i>lined</i> by age and constant                     |
|               | squinting at the sun.   |
| 6. b          |   |
| 7.            | Along the edge of the rug, the little boy <i>lined</i> his                |
|               | toy soldiers.   |
| 7. c          |   |

You cannot always place all the words in a meaning together when trying it in a sentence, can you? Along the edge of the rug, the little boy *arranged* his toy soldiers *in a line*.

8. "Before you begin the spelling lesson, please *line* your papers," instructed Mrs. Olson. 8. a

Sometimes you may find that certain kinds of reading you try to do are hard going. Have you stopped to think why some reading is harder than other reading? Perhaps it is because the words the writer used are new to you. Or perhaps he has used familiar words in new combinations and thus made it difficult for you to follow his thought.

Try working through Practice C to see the kinds of sentences a writer may use to communicate with you, the reader.

C. Read each numbered sentence. Then read each lettered sentence. Choose the letter of the sentence that says the same thing as the numbered sentence, but in different words.

1. An electric charge filled the air as the pole vaulter raced down the runway, jammed his flexible pole into the slot in the dirt, and spun his body upward until he seemed suspended on his fingers, upside down over the crossbar. 1. b
2. A plunging rivulet of flashing white water met our eyes as we emerged from the trees at the edge of the steep incline. 2. a
  - a. We saw the narrow rapids from the wooded hill.
  - b. The crowd was tense during the time the athlete took his leap.
  - c. They went from one side of the river to the other, stepping briskly but carefully on the stones.

The numbered sentences are vivid word pictures. However, it takes more thought to understand them because the writer has used some words that may be new to you. He has also used some familiar words in a different way. Let's look more closely at those sentences.

D. Refer back to Sentences 1 and 2 in Practice C in order to answer the following questions.

1. Which words mean the same thing as *the crowd was tense*? (Choose one.)
  - a. An electric charge filled the air.
  - b. The pole vaulter raced down the runway.
  - c. He seemed suspended on his fingers.

1. a
2. Which words help you to see how *the athlete took his leap*? (Choose three groups.)
  - a. An electric charge filled the air.
  - b. The pole vaulter raced down the runway.
  - c. jammed his flexible pole into the slot in the dirt
  - d. spun his body upward

2. b, c, d
3. In the phrase *a plunging rivulet of flashing white water*, what does *rivulet* mean?
  - a. a small river
  - b. a rivet gun
  - c. a rival

3. a
4. What does *emerge* mean in the phrase *we emerged from the trees*?
  - a. came out
  - b. went down
  - c. met

4. a
5. Which words mean the same as the word *hill*?
  - a. flashing white water
  - b. steep incline
  - c. the edge

5. b

You can see that written words tell wondrous things. All the history of the world is written in books. Thousands of exciting stories—and sad ones too—are written for you to read. Words mean what people want them to mean. Words put together in sentences give meaning when you read them. As a reader, it is up to you to learn the meanings of more words and to read with better understanding the millions of sentences in the books we have.

## Sentences Get Meaning from Other Sentences

Have you ever noticed in your reading that a sentence gives you full meaning only in relation to the other sentences around it?

Read the sentence below. You will notice that it says very little because there are no other sentences to give it meaning.

**The wrinkles became larger as time passed.**

Do you know from reading this sentence what is the topic of the passage from which this sentence was taken? You may guess that the writer is telling about someone's face, which is wrinkled with age. Possibly the passage reads like this:

At the corner of his eyes, little wrinkles, like light pencil tracings, stretched outward in a fan shape. *The wrinkles became larger as time passed.*  
He was showing signs of old age.

But what meaning does the same sentence have in the following paragraph?

Millions of years ago, when the earth's crust was softer in this region, there must have been a force that pushed the flat ground into ridges and giant wrinkles. *The wrinkles became larger as time passed.* Eventually these hills were formed, and trees grew over them to make the forests you see today.

Now you see the same sentence in the middle of other sentences. The meaning of that same sentence is changed because of the *context*.

## PRACTICE

A. Read each numbered sentence. Choose the letter of the sentence that has the same meaning. If you cannot be sure of the meaning of the numbered sentence and either choice might be correct, choose the letter *c*.

For example:

**He raced past the others.**

- a. He passed the other runners.
- b. He drove his outboard motorboat by the other boats.
- c. This needs to be set in context to make its meaning clear.

Letter *c* is the correct answer. You can't be sure whether he was racing on foot, on horseback, in a boat, or what. The sentence needs to be placed *in context*, among other sentences, to make it understandable.

Now see how well you understand context.

- 1. It hung limply in the hot, moist air.
  - a. The dampness made the girl's hair lose its curl.
  - b. Not a breath of air moved the flag on this hot summer day.
  - c. This needs to be set in context to make its meaning clear.1. c
- 2. Tony jabbed his fist into his mitt, waiting for the first pitch.
  - a. Restlessly Tony waited for the baseball game to begin.
  - b. Tony tested the mitt before deciding to buy it.
  - c. This needs to be set in context to make its meaning clear.2. a

3. Zooming only briefly through the air, the plane soon crashed to the ground.

- The boys' model airplane was defective and flew only a short time before falling to the ground.
- The test flight of the new jet was a failure.
- This needs to be set in context to make its meaning clear.

4. They heard the roar and huddled together in the dark.

- That night the campers were startled by a loud noise and clutched each other fearfully.
- In the bomb shelter the frightened people sat close together and listened to the engines of the enemy plane.
- This needs to be set in context to make its meaning clear.

3. c

4. c

**B.** Read the following passage about the well-known woman scientist Madame Marie Curie.

### The Light in the Shed

Pierre and Marie Curie looked at the shed. <sup>1</sup>It had once been used as a dissecting room by the School of Medicine. <sup>2</sup>It was now so old and dilapidated that it was not even a suitable place for dead bodies.

Yet this was the place where the Curies would work for the next four years. <sup>3</sup>They were delighted finally to have a laboratory—no matter how poor it might be. Now they could begin their experiments with

radium, the radioactive substance whose existence they must prove to unbelieving scientists.

Marie and Pierre knew that pitchblende contains radium. <sup>4</sup>Their job would be to extract pure radium from this ore.

The day the first wagonload of pitchblende arrived at their laboratory shed, the Curies raced from the School of Physics with their laboratory gowns flapping around



them. Marie snipped open one of the sacks and thrust her hands into the ore. Her eyes glowed as she thought of the radium.

Soon after the Curies began their search for radium, they decided to divide the work. Pierre would study the nature and qualities of radium; Marie would continue the task of obtaining a sample of pure radium.

<sup>5</sup>From 1898 to 1902, the Curies worked under miserable conditions. The sun beating down through the skylights in the shed made summer days unbearably hot. The little stove in the shed could not dispel the freezing cold of winter days. When it rained, water dripped through the skylights onto the dirt floor and rickety work tables.

Marie took little notice of conditions inside the shed. During the first years she spent most of her time in the courtyard.

Through the heat of summer and the blasts of winter, Marie stirred tons of hot pitchblende with an iron rod nearly as big as she. <sup>6</sup>Her back ached as she poured off the unwanted liquids and materials. Finally, the tons of pitchblende dwindled to matter which was placed in jars on the laboratory tables.

Then came more months of painstaking work. The dust which swirled through the workshed hampered the final steps. Pierre was ready to give up, to continue the work when they had a clean laboratory and better apparatus. <sup>7</sup>But Marie would not hear of it.

She kept at her task, patiently retracing and redoing steps when dust spoiled the sample on which she had been working. She had thought originally that she would be able to extract twenty pounds of radium from a ton of pitchblende.

As she continued purifying the matter, she realized that pitchblende contains an unbelievably small amount of radium.

In 1902, Madame Marie Curie obtained a sample of pure radium. It wasn't twenty pounds; it wasn't a pound; it wasn't even an ounce. From eight tons of pitchblende, Marie Curie finally succeeded in

preparing a decigram—a small fraction of an ounce—of her precious new element.

That night Marie sat in the darkness of the shed, staring in fascination at the glowing outlines of the radium. Unbelievers would now have to admit the existence of an element that shines by its own light.

Read each lettered sentence below. Write the number of the sentence in the article that tells the same thing in a different way. Two of the following sentences cannot be matched with any sentence in the article.

- a. Pierre and Marie Curie had the task of taking from the pitchblende a sample of pure radium. a. 4
- b. The shed was in such poor condition that the School of Medicine no longer used it for a dissecting room. b. 2
- c. The Curies were poor and had no place to work. c. —
- d. In the process of extracting the radium, Marie worked at removing the other materials found in pitchblende until her back hurt from the effort. d. 6
- e. The School of Medicine taught its pupils about anatomy by dissecting corpses. e. —
- f. Marie would not listen to her husband's suggestion that they give up trying to prepare a sample of radium. f. 7

**C.** Let's try the same type of exercise again, this time using a scientific account about radium itself. As you read the following article, be sure you know what words like *it*, *some*, *many*, and *they* refer to.

## Radium

<sup>1</sup>At the end of the 1800's, scientists became greatly excited by the discovery that certain substances are radioactive. <sup>2</sup>A French physicist found that the light and heat given off by minerals containing uranium could penetrate paper and thin layers of certain other materials. <sup>3</sup>This fired the imagination of the scientific world, and others began to explore the possibilities of elements which produce heat, light, and energy.

<sup>4</sup>One of these was Madame Marie Curie, whose experiments proved the existence of radium.

<sup>5</sup>Radium is so highly radioactive that only a tiny amount will make a substance radioactive. <sup>6</sup>You remember that from eight tons of pitchblende, Madame Curie extracted only a decigram, about a half teaspoonful, of radium. <sup>7</sup>Uranium, which is found in the same ore, contains radium. <sup>8</sup>But there is only one part radium to every three million parts of uranium.

<sup>9</sup>Because it is found in such small quantities and is so difficult and costly to extract, radium compounds are very expensive. <sup>10</sup>At first, the only major source of pitchblende known was the deposits in Bohemia.

However, the discovery of pitchblende deposits in Canada and the Belgian Congo later in this century caused the price of radium to drop from \$150,000 per gram to \$25,000 per gram.

<sup>11</sup>The major uses of this element are in luminous paints and in the treatment of diseases like cancer. <sup>12</sup>Fortunately, radium is so powerful that tiny amounts—a few cents worth—can make clock or instrument dials painted with luminous paint glow for years.

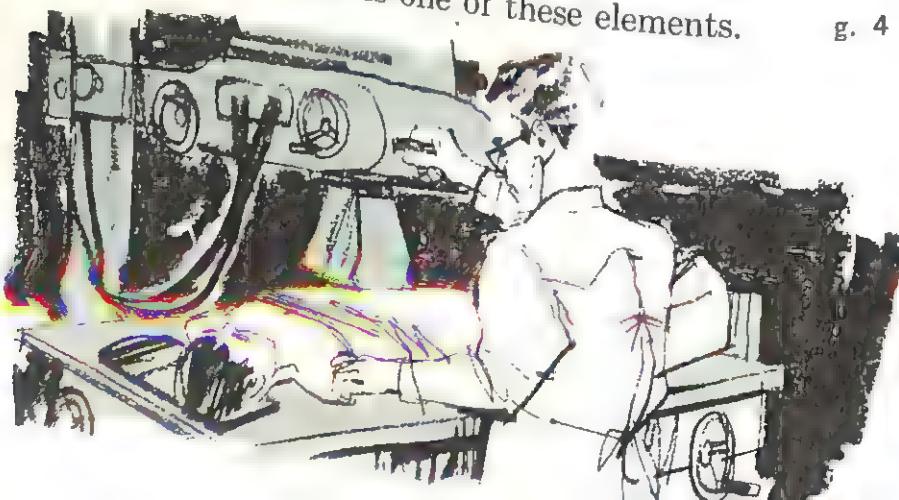
In hospitals, radium is kept in vaults. Roosevelt Hospital in New York City has the largest amount of radium, valued at \$3,000,000. When treating a cancerous patient, a machine containing the radium is aimed at the patient and radioactive rays are shot at the diseased tissue.

<sup>13</sup>The radiation destroys the unhealthy tissue. Since radiation can also be harmful in large quantities, there is a special device which allows the doctors and nurses to leave the room before the machine discharges the radioactive rays.

<sup>14</sup>Because of the limited amounts of radium and its expense, radioactive isotopes are replacing radium in medical treatments.

Choose the number of the sentence in the article that tells the same thing as the lettered sentences below. Two of the sentences below are not the same as any of the numbered sentences.

- a. Radium is used primarily in treating diseases similar to cancer and in the production of paints that glow in the dark. a. 11
- b. When scientists heard about radioactive materials, they began to experiment with other elements that might be radioactive and to think of their possible uses. b. 3
- c. Any substance containing radium costs a great deal because there is so little radium available and the processing of ore containing radium is costly. c. 9
- d. Radium is no longer being used in the treatment of diseases such as cancer. d. —
- e. The radium in uranium makes uranium radioactive. e. —
- f. From pitchblende which contains traces of radium, uranium can also be extracted. f. 7
- g. Madame Curie was one of the scientists who was excited by the possibilities of radioactive elements. She proved that radium is one of these elements. g. 4



LESSON **3** Getting the Main Idea

You know that often a single sentence says little because its meaning depends on the sentences around it. It gets its full meaning from its context. In your reading, you get meaning from groups of sentences called *paragraphs*.

The above three sentences are in a paragraph. So is the sentence you are now reading. Paragraphs are useful ways of grouping sentences that deal with the same idea. Because the paragraph begins with an indentation, it is easy for you, the reader, to pick out the beginning of a new main idea.

You will find in your reading that not all paragraphs express a main idea. There is the custom of using a paragraph to start each new quotation of a speaker. There are other paragraphing customs that you know from your work in school. But when a paragraph does express a main idea, you want to be able to pick it out and understand it. Now read this paragraph.

When a pilot makes the decision to change the course of his flight, his reactions must be transmitted to the sensitive controls of the plane immediately. Traveling at supersonic speeds, the hurtling tons of metal and fuel need several miles to execute a maneuver. Even a turn of a  $10^{\circ}$  angle from the line of flight requires more than one mile when the plane is going over 1,200 miles an hour.

Which sentence expresses the main idea of the paragraph?

1. A supersonic plane weighs several tons of metal and fuel.
2. Pilots must make decisions when in flight.
3. The plane at high speeds needs a long distance to turn.

If you chose 3, you were right. The first two sentences state facts which the paragraph includes, but the weight of the plane is mentioned in only one sentence and only one sentence refers to pilots making decisions. On the other hand, all the sentences in the paragraph deal with turning the plane.

## PRACTICE

A. Read the following passage carefully, looking for the main idea in each paragraph. Then answer the questions at the end. It will help you prove to yourself that you know how to find main ideas.

### The \$100,000 Prize

(A) Early sea travelers like the Greeks and Phoenicians tried never to get out of sight of land. Because they had no accurate way of determining where they were at sea, they used recognizable mountains, rocks, headlands, and river mouths as landmarks. Ships rarely sailed at night unless a well-known star gave the sailors a clear and unmistakable line of direction.

(B) Later on, places were located by latitude and longitude. The lines of latitude, which are called parallels, measure the distance north or south of the equator. Lines of longitude are called meridians. They measure the distance east or west of a special line that runs from pole to pole.

(C) Different nations used different lines from which to measure

longitude. The British, for example, selected a meridian that ran through Greenwich.

(D) But no matter what meridian a country used, it was still difficult for mariners to know exactly where their ship was in the trackless ocean. Most sailors navigated by "dead reckoning"—taking into account winds, currents, and the distance the ship had traveled. Experienced skippers considered themselves skillful if they ended a long voyage only 50 or 60 miles from their destination!

(E) An instrument called a sextant was developed to measure latitude. Longitude, however, required an accurate clock, one that did not vary more than two or three seconds a day.

(F) Finding longitude was so important for the seafaring British

that Parliament, in 1714, set up a special Board of Longitude. This Board offered a prize of £20,000 (about \$100,000) for any device that would measure longitude with an error of not more than 34 miles.

(G) Many inventors came forward with both sensible and weird devices, some of which were tested. But none proved accurate enough. It was not until 1764 that a man named John Harrison finally built a

timekeeper that satisfied the strict requirement. On a test voyage from Portsmouth to Jamaica, the longitude calculated with Harrison's chronometer was only 1 1/4 miles off.

(H) The problem of finding the longitude had been solved. Mariners could now navigate accurately in open sea, thanks to the sextant and Harrison's chronometer. But Harrison did not collect the last of his prize money until 1772.

1. Which of the following sentences best expresses the main idea of Paragraph A?

- a. Early sailors liked to stay away from shore because rocks and headlands could damage their ships.
- b. Most mariners preferred sailing at night because the stars showed them where to go.
- c. Sailors in early days stayed close to shore because they did not have the proper navigating instruments.

1. c

2. What is the main idea of Paragraph B?

- a. Later on, places were located by longitude and latitude.
- b. Lines of longitude are called meridians.
- c. The equator separates north from south.

2. a

3. What is the main idea of Paragraph C?

- a. Different nations used different lines from which to measure longitude.
- b. Distances were measured by using lines of longitude.
- c. The British selected the line of longitude running through Greenwich.

3. a

4. What is the main idea of Paragraph D?

- a. Lines of longitude did not actually help mariners navigate.
- b. Most sailors navigated by “dead reckoning,” which was not very accurate.
- c. Experienced skippers were happy to end up only 50 or 60 miles from their destination.

5. What is the main idea of Paragraph E?

- a. A sextant measures latitude.
- b. A clock must not vary to measure longitude.
- c. An instrument which could measure latitude was developed, but there was no instrument to measure longitude.

6. What is the main idea of Paragraph F?

- a. The British Board of Longitude offered a prize for any fairly accurate device for measuring longitude.
- b. The prize offered by the British Board of Longitude was to be £20,000 (\$100,000).
- c. The device could vary 34 miles.

7. What is the main idea of Paragraph G?

- a. No device proved accurate enough.
- b. It took fifty years before a timekeeper was invented that not only satisfied the Board’s requirement but even surpassed it.
- c. The longitude calculated with Harrison’s chronometer was only  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles off.

8. What is the main idea of Paragraph H?

- a. Finding longitude was a difficult problem.
- b. Mariners could now navigate accurately in open sea, thanks to the sextant and Harrison’s chronometer.
- c. Harrison did not collect the last of his prize money until 1772.

4. b

5. c

6. a

7. b

8. b

You can see that the main idea of a paragraph is sometimes stated in a sentence within that paragraph. Look for key sentences within paragraphs so that you can capture the meaning and the main idea. Now answer the next two questions about navigation.

9. Which of the following should be considered in determining the position of a ship by dead reckoning? (Choose three.)

- a. the force of the wind
- b. the time of day
- c. the weather
- d. the weight of the ship
- e. the distance traveled in the last 24 hours
- f. the location of islands
- g. the direction of the current

9. a, e, g

10. The word *chronometer* used at the end of the article means \_\_\_\_\_.  

- a. a pocket watch
- b. a precision clock
- c. a chromium sextant

10. b

B. Read the next article to find the main ideas in it. There are *five* paragraphs and *five* main ideas. Following the article are eight sentences. Choose the five sentences that seem to state the main ideas in the article.

### Graveyard Derelicts

(A) One day that brand new shiny car will find itself in a graveyard for old automobiles—the local junk heap. It happens to the best of cars nowadays with automobile factories turning out new models

every year to tempt the American public. As the new models replace the old, the old find their way to the graveyard, forgotten by their former owners but not by the junk dealers, who sell them.

(B) Even the oldest car is worth money to the junk dealer. Eventually he will probably sell the cars to a plant that salvages the parts that are usable, which means practically everything but the glass and upholstery. He may welcome to his lot do-it-yourself mechanics and old-car enthusiasts, who buy parts taken from the derelict cars.

(C) Not long ago a man in Florida noticed that red snappers, a local ocean fish, liked to make their homes in the hulls of sunken ships. This gave him an idea. He bought some old cars, dumped them into

the ocean close to shore, and sat back and waited. Sure enough, once seaweed and simple sea creatures took over the cars, the red snappers moved in.

(D) Other resort areas are trying to attract fish—and, with them, paying fishermen—in the same way. Derelicts from automobile graveyards are being converted to homes for fish in many coastal regions.

(E) Other people with imagination may discover more new ways to use discarded cars. Who knows where you may run across the old family car in years to come!

1. A man in Florida used some old cars to make homes for red snappers.
2. Derelicts from automobile graveyards are being converted to homes for fish in many coastal regions.
3. Fishermen are going to other resort areas.
4. Even the oldest car is worth money to the junk dealer.
5. As new automobile models replace the old, used cars eventually find their way to the junkyard.
6. The junk dealer sells parts of old cars to people who come to his lot.
7. Who knows where you may run across the old family car in years to come.
8. Other people with imagination may discover more new ways to use discarded cars.

1. C

2. D

3. —

4. B

5. A

6. —

7. —

8. E

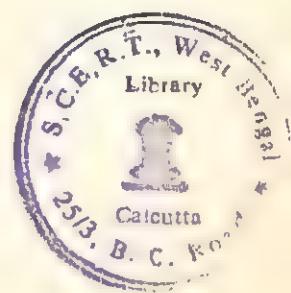
# Paragraphs Get Meaning from Other Paragraphs

Most of your reading is made up of stories or articles that are long enough to have several paragraphs. The textbooks you have in school contain hundreds of paragraphs. Even mathematics problems often have several paragraphs.

The paragraphs in your reading are linked together to carry forward the full meaning the writers intended you to get. These paragraphs depend on each other.

Here is a short paragraph, taken directly from a textbook you might use. Read it once to find the main idea. Then read it again to find the ideas that might come before and after it in other paragraphs.

Its busiest inhabitants are the umbrella ants. They follow one another in a long line, each one holding above its head, like a tiny umbrella, a bit of green leaf that is to be stored away for food. There are so many of them and they travel back and forth so constantly that they have worn a bare path across what was once the cathedral floor.



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What is the main idea of this paragraph?

What do you think was the main idea of the paragraph that came just before it? Could it be that many insects live in the old cathedral? Was the earlier main idea that this is a quiet place with little activity?

Now read these two paragraphs together. The second one is the same one you read before. The first is the actual paragraph that comes just before it in the book.

Today Old Panama is a quiet place, with enormous trees growing out of the ruins of what was once the cathedral aisle. It is hard to believe that it was once a rich and busy city, for now the long-horned cattle in the fields and the green lizards sunning themselves and the black children playing on the sand seem its liveliest inhabitants.

Its busiest inhabitants are the umbrella ants. They follow one another in a long line, each one holding above its head, like a tiny umbrella, a bit of green leaf that is to be stored away for food. There are so many of them and they travel back and forth so constantly that they have worn a bare path across what was once the cathedral floor.\*

Which are the two main ideas presented by these two paragraphs?

1. Today Old Panama is a quiet place. Its busiest inhabitants are umbrella ants.
2. It is hard to believe that Old Panama was once a rich, busy city. The umbrella ants travel back and forth so constantly that they have worn a path on the old cathedral floor.

If you chose the first pair of sentences, you are right. You understand that the meaning of a paragraph is related to the meaning of the paragraph next to it.

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## PRACTICE

A. Read the following article. One paragraph has a main idea that is stated in its very first sentence. The other paragraphs have main ideas that are not stated in any sentence. See if you can recognize all the main ideas.



### Boxes for Breakfast

(A) What will happen if the first astronauts to land on the moon for some reason delay their return to earth and run out of food? What will they find to eat on the moon? Scientists are certain that the moon is barren, supporting no plant life. Does this mean that the astronauts would be doomed? One New York

scientist doesn't think so. He says that in an emergency spacemen could eat the material in which their supplies were packaged. This doesn't mean, however, that they will have to chew and digest wood and paper!

(B) Dr. Sidney Schwartz of Grumman Aircraft Engineering

Corporation has developed a packaging material which can be eaten. It is made from milk powder and starch which have been heated, pressed, and molded. Other ingredients, including hominy grits and banana flakes, are used like plaster to fill in any spaces and keep the material from cracking.

(C) If an astronaut finds he must use these built-in emergency rations, Dr. Schwartz suggests that he soak the material first for eight to ten hours. If he is too hungry to wait that long for dinner, the spaceman may grind up the stuff and then

boil it. In either case, Dr. Schwartz assures future space pioneers, it will taste like breakfast cereal with a slight banana flavor.

(D) The edible packaging might well be used in fallout shelters too. Owners of small aircraft and boats could also package emergency supplies in the material for a little added insurance in case of trouble. And think what such packaging could do to relieve the problem of trash disposal. Boxes could be eaten for breakfast instead of being added to bulging garbage cans! Would you eat packages and cream?

1. What is the main idea of Paragraph A?

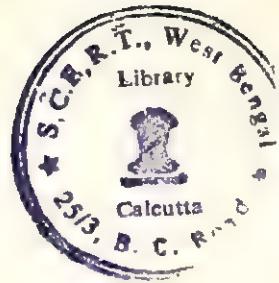
- a. What will happen if the first astronauts to land on the moon for some reason delay their return to earth?
- b. The moon does not have plant life.
- c. If the first astronauts who land on the moon run out of food, they will be able to eat the material in which their supplies were packaged.

1. c

2. What is the main idea of Paragraph B?

- a. Dr. Sidney Schwartz of Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation has developed a packaging material which can be eaten.
- b. Hominy grits and banana flakes are plastered on molded milk powder and starch.
- c. A mixture of milk powder and starch can be molded into packaging material.

2. a



3. What is the main idea of Paragraph C?

- a. If an astronaut finds he must use these built-in emergency rations, Dr. Schwartz suggests that he soak the material first for eight to ten hours.
- b. The packaging material tastes like breakfast cereal and bananas.
- c. The packaging material, which tastes like cereal, must be softened before it can be eaten.

3. c

4. What is the main idea of Paragraph D?

- a. The edible packaging might well be used in fallout shelters too.
- b. Many uses may be found for the new edible packaging material.
- c. The new material could be used to package emergency supplies.

4. b

B. The following paragraphs are not in their correct order. They do not make much sense as you read them together. Therefore, you must read each paragraph separately.

Decide what each main idea is, and notice how some main ideas depend on others to be clearly understood. You must read certain paragraphs first before you can fully comprehend the main ideas in others.

See if you can number the paragraphs in their correct order. The first one is numbered for you.

\_\_\_\_\_ With a last hasty look all around and a big gulp, Herbie dashed up to the house on the corner and slipped the envelope under the white door. Then he spun around and raced back home.

\_\_\_\_\_ He was slipping into his jeans and shirt in the semidarkness of his room. Grabbing his jacket, he then crept to the front door, eased it open, and then closed the door softly behind him.

1 It was early morning and the Stoner house was quiet. Curtains hid the brightening sky and rosy clouds from the sleeping occupants of the house. The members of the Stoner family were still peacefully dozing—that is, all except Herbie.

Herbie made a face and groaned, then rolled over so his mother wouldn't see the smile that spread across his face.

Herbie had just jumped back into bed when he heard the alarm clock in his parents' room buzz sharply. In a few minutes Mrs. Stoner poked her head in the doorway to Herbie's room.

Once outside, Herbie sped down the street. Toward the end of the block, he slowed down and glanced furtively in all directions. Then out of his jacket pocket he took a large white envelope with entwined hearts and a chubby Cupid in one corner. The name DIANE had been pasted on it with letters cut from magazines.

"Good morning and Happy Valentine's Day!" she called cheerily. "Not that today means anything special to a girl-hater like you! But one day you'll be bounding out of bed with Valentine in hand to make some lucky lady's heart go pitter-pat."

4, 2, 1, 7, 5, 3, 6



Now read the paragraphs in the order you numbered them. Do they make sense together? If they don't, try again. Then look at the correct answer.

You probably discovered that you could put the paragraphs in order when you understood the main idea of each paragraph. Then you could tell the *order* of ideas and events.

Now go on to Lesson 5 to review what you know about getting meaning from paragraphs.

Words make up sentences and sentences make up paragraphs. But often a paragraph has no sentence that tells you exactly what the main idea is.

Here is a paragraph with seven sentences. Can you find the main idea?

In order to measure with a yardstick the circumference of a wheel, it is necessary to make the distance around the circle into a straight line. Mark a spot on the bicycle tire where it touches the ground. Put another mark on the ground where the tire starts turning. Roll

the tire ahead until the spot on the tire touches the ground again. Mark the ground at this second point. Now measure with the yardstick the distance from the first spot on the ground to the second spot. This is the circumference of the tire.

Which of the following is the main idea of the paragraph? Ask yourself: What is each sentence in the paragraph helping me to understand?

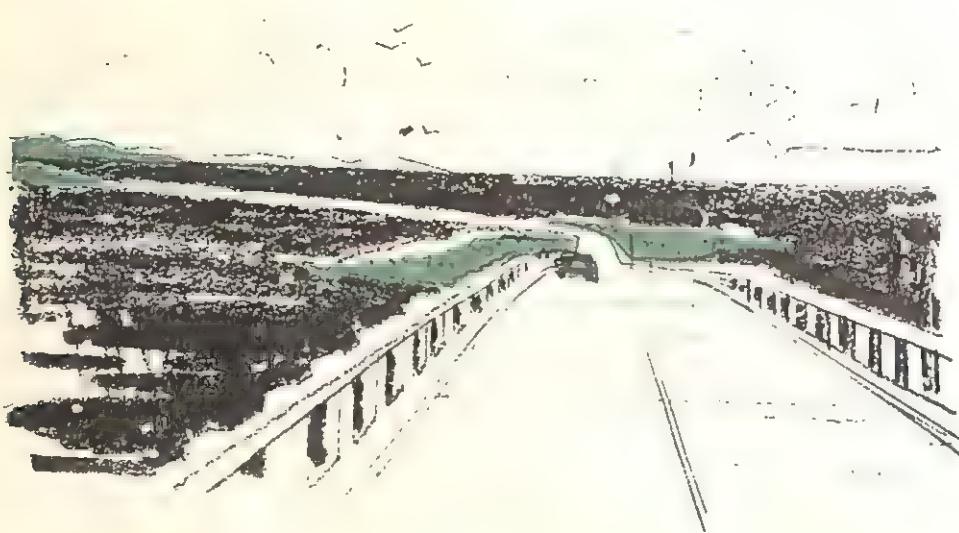
1. A place marked on a bicycle tire will touch the ground on every revolution.
2. A circle and a straight line are not the same, but both can be measured with a yardstick.
3. To measure the circumference of a tire with a yardstick, you measure the distance the tire travels in one revolution.
4. Circles and straight lines are really the same.
5. There is no main idea.

Number 3 is the main idea of the paragraph.

When you have the main idea of a paragraph, you have an easy way of remembering what a paragraph tells you. As you read longer articles, keep the main ideas in your head.

## PRACTICE

Read the following article about some of the world's fascinating places. Try to grasp the main idea of each paragraph. Then answer the questions following the article. Some of the main ideas may be stated in sentences; some of them may not. If you watch carefully for main ideas in paragraphs, you may surprise yourself at how much you remember.



### End of the Land

(A) Places at the "end of the land" always have fascinated travelers and visitors. There is something quite romantic about a spot that is surrounded almost entirely by sea and sky alone, and faces the rest of the world without any visible barrier.

Such a spot is Key West, near the very end of an island chain that reaches out into the Gulf of

Mexico. Although it is a part of Florida, where Spanish, French, and British once ruled, no flag except the Stars and Stripes ever has waved over Key West.

An ocean highway running from Key Largo, near Miami, connects Key West with the continental United States. Once this highway was a railroad right-of-way, but the railroad was destroyed in a

great hurricane in 1935. The automobile road that replaced the tracks is the longest over-water road in the world. One of its bridges is more than 7 miles long. Another rises 75 feet above the ocean.

Down at the tip of South America, Cape Horn marks the "end of land." This rocky spot is as cold and forbidding as Key West is warm and friendly. Before the Panama Canal was dug, ships going from the east coast of the United States to the west coast had to round Cape Horn or else go the long way through the Suez Canal.

(B) Rounding Cape Horn was a rough enough trip for a steamer, but it was a terrible experience for a sailing vessel. Scores of vessels perished on the sharp rocks. Many took weeks to make the passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

(C) To avoid the Horn itself, some sailing masters took the island route through the Strait of Magellan, known also as LeMaire Strait. Both were treacherous passages that required expert seamanship if the vessel was to get through safely. In the early days, the unfriendly natives made the route even more dangerous. These wild savages were among the most

backward in the world. In the year 1520 Magellan named their territory "Tierra del Fuego"—Land of Fire—because of the many campfires he saw on the hills.

Another famous end of the land spot where beacon fires once flamed is called, appropriately, Land's End. This is on the southwestern tip of England. If Cape Horn was a symbol of ancient sailing days, then Land's End has become a symbol of modern science, especially in the reporting of weather and the condition of the sea.

(D) On the bottom of the ocean at Land's End, an instrument called a "wave recorder" tells all about the winds that are creating waves at sea, whether a storm is brewing, and how fast the storm is approaching England. On a chart in the meteorological station, you can read the entire life history of the storm.

Among the other interesting places at the end of the land are North Cape, where Norway juts into the Arctic Ocean; the Cape of Good Hope, at the southern tip of Africa; and Gibraltar, where the British have maintained a powerful military garrison for many centuries. All these places have romantic stories of their own.

A. Let's check first to see how well you understood the main idea in some of the paragraphs.

1. What is the main idea of Paragraph A?

- a. Places at the "end of the land" always have fascinated travelers and visitors.
- b. Some places in the world are very romantic.
- c. There are some spots that are surrounded almost entirely by sea and sky.

1. a

2. What is the main idea of Paragraph B?

- a. Rounding Cape Horn was a rough trip for a steamer.
- b. The trip around Cape Horn was especially dangerous for sailing ships.
- c. It often took many weeks to make the trip around Cape Horn.

2. b

3. What is the main idea of Paragraph C?

- a. To avoid the Horn itself, some sailing masters took the island route through the Strait of Magellan.
- b. The route through the Strait of Magellan, sometimes taken to avoid the dangerous trip around the Horn, was treacherous too.
- c. In 1520 Magellan named the territory surrounding the Strait of Magellan "Tierra del Fuego."

3. b

4. What is the main idea of Paragraph D?

- a. On the bottom of the ocean at Land's End, an instrument called a "wave recorder" tells all about winds.
- b. On a chart in the meteorological station you can read the entire life history of a storm.
- c. At Land's End weather information is gathered and reported.

4. c

B. Now you will see how understanding the main ideas helps you to remember information. Think about the main ideas in the article; then answer the following questions about the article.

1. Why did some sailing masters go through the Strait of Magellan instead of around Cape Horn?
  - a. to avoid the dangers of the Horn
  - b. because of friendly natives
  - c. because of the light given off by the campfires1. a
2. What is the importance of Land's End?
  - a. Beacon fires burn there to guide ships.
  - b. Weather information is gathered there.
  - c. It is on the southwestern tip of England.2. b
3. In what way are Key West, Cape Horn, Land's End, and the Cape of Good Hope alike?
  - a. They are all cold and forbidding places.
  - b. They are all north of the equator.
  - c. They are all spots that are surrounded almost entirely by sea and sky.3. c
4. Which end of the land is part of the United States?
  - a. Key West
  - b. Cape Horn
  - c. Gibraltar4. a

Were you surprised at how much you remembered without having to refer again to the article?

Were you able to remember the main ideas of each of the different paragraphs?

Your improved ability to understand the main ideas of paragraphs will help you in all your reading. You will be able to remember the important information you read in history and geography and science, and you will also enjoy your leisure-time reading more.

Read these three paragraphs carefully. Then answer the questions to prove to yourself how well you understand what you read.

(A) The sun-drenched beach seemed deserted, haunted only by the shadows of clouds that danced merrily in the sky overhead. Except for the rustling of palm trees and the lapping of waves against the coral reefs, you could almost hear a pin drop. From out of the dense tropical vegetation, a fawnlike creature came to lap from a small pool of water. Henry rested the oars in his lap and watched in complete fascination.

(B) "Hank, old boy," he said to himself, "who'd ever have thought you'd have a whole island all to yourself for a month?" He thought back over the sequence of events that had brought him to this spot today. When was it that his interest in weather had really begun? Was it in elementary school when he learned the names of various cloud formations? Or was it later when he and his science class built and kept their own weather station? No! It began much

earlier. Before he had even begun to go to school, Henry had loved to watch the changing sky and look for faces and shapes among the cloud formations. On through high school and college his interest had grown and his knowledge increased. He remembered how proud he was to have served two years in the Army's Meteorologic Department. Finally, though, he remembered the telegram that had arrived just a few short weeks before, announcing the approval and financing of his island expedition to study the nature of cloud formations over large bodies of water.

(C) Overhead, clouds filled the sky. They were cirro-cumulus clouds—those small, white, rounded masses that are made up entirely of ice crystals because they float at such high altitudes. These cloud formations are often called a mackerel sky because they make designs very similar to the scaly skin of a mackerel.

1. *Lap*, like many words, has several meanings. When we say the deer came “to *lap*,” it means \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. a part of the body
  - b. a way of drinking
  - c. washing or flowing against something
2. In the group of words “rested the oars in his *lap*,” the word *lap* means \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. a part of the body
  - b. a way of drinking
  - c. washing or flowing against something
3. Context is important because it \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. improves your spelling
  - b. helps give meaning to words
  - c. improves the punctuation
4. In Paragraph A, which words help you see how quiet and deserted the island was?
  - a. sun-drenched beach
  - b. rustling of the palms
  - c. hear a pin drop
  - d. dense vegetation
5. Which of the following best states the main idea of Paragraph A?
  - a. many animals are found on tropical islands
  - b. why Henry came to the island
  - c. how quiet and deserted the island seemed
  - d. cloud formations over water
6. Choose five of the following words which can be used in identifying cirro-cumulus clouds.

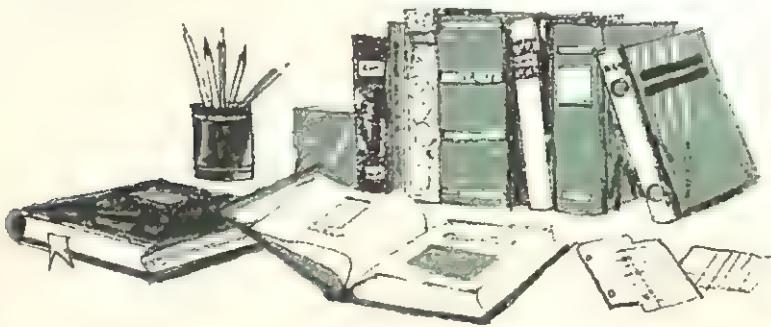
|                 |                  |                 |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| a. large        | e. rosy          | i. grey         |
| b. water        | f. wisps         | j. puffs        |
| c. white        | g. high altitude | k. round masses |
| d. low altitude | h. small         | l. ice          |

7. You will remember information and facts and be better able to tell the order of ideas and events if you will \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. read only those paragraphs in a story or assignment that interest you
- b. find the main idea of each paragraph
- c. count the number of sentences in each paragraph

8. Which of the following statements about paragraphs is *not* true?

- a. They are a group of sentences dealing with the same main idea.
- b. They always begin with an indentation.
- c. They always have one sentence that states the main idea.
- d. They often start the quotation of a new speaker.



**Reviewing Skills**

- 1. b    5. c
- 2. a    6. c, g, h, k, l
- 3. b    7. b
- 4. c    8. c



### The Proud Weaver

Long ago in the country of Lydia lived a woman renowned for her skill as a weaver. Many came to watch her work and to wonder over the beautiful tapestries she wove. Even the nymphs marveled at her ability. They murmured among themselves that she must certainly have received her gift from the gods.

Now this woman, Arachne by name, was very proud of her skill at the loom. She chanced one day to overhear a nymph remark that Athena herself must have taught Arachne how to weave. The remark enraged Arachne, who was reluctant to acknowledge that anyone— even the goddess of household arts—had helped her to achieve her excellence in weaving.

"Ha!" snorted Arachne disdainfully. "Athena taught me nothing! If she thinks she can weave better than I, let her come and prove it."

The nymphs gasped at Arachne's boldness. An old woman among the gathering of admirers shook her finger at the maiden,

"Careful what you say, my pretty. Such words will bring the wrath of the gods down upon you!"

With a toss of her head Arachne replied, "I fear no one, man or god. And I will not believe Athena can weave better than I until I see it with my own eyes."

"Very well," the old woman said.

As Arachne watched, the stooped figure of the old woman straightened and grew. The wrinkles in the weathered, old face smoothed and

disappeared. Where the old woman had been before, there now stood a tall and stately beautiful woman.

“Athena!” the nymphs gasped in amazement.

“It is the goddess Athena!” the other onlookers said excitedly.

“And now, Arachne,” the goddess stated majestically, “we shall see who is the better weaver. Fetch me a loom. You will soon learn the folly of speaking lightly of the gods.”

The two women started weaving. Their shuttles flew back and forth across their looms. As though by magic the threads joined, and two beautiful tapestries unfolded under the skillful fingers of the women.

Athena’s tapestry showed her triumphs over men and other gods. The colors blended in harmony, and the figures vibrated like living things.

Arachne’s tapestry made fun of the gods. Yet it was wondrous to behold, so perfect was the craftsmanship.

1. What word best describes Arachne?

2. Who was Athena?

3. What happened to Arachne?

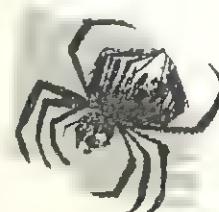
As Athena finished her work and gazed at Arachne’s loom, she caught her breath. It was hard to believe that a mortal could create such a masterpiece. Arachne’s skill did equal hers! Still, this proud young maiden must be punished for her boastfulness and rudeness, Athena decided.

To Arachne she said, “Since weaving means so much to you, you will spend the rest of your life weaving delicate patterns with the finest of threads. Drink this.” She handed a cup to Arachne.

Arachne was delighted with her victory. To herself she thought, “I need not this potion to ensure my skill!” But she accepted the cup and drank the potion.

Before the eyes of her admirers Arachne began to shrink. Her human form shriveled away to a mere speck. Her arms disappeared. Six more legs were added to her body.

The tiny spider crawled to the corner of Arachne’s loom and began to weave a web.



1. boastful
2. the goddess of household arts
3. Athena changed her into a spider.

You are getting very good at finding the main ideas in paragraphs. If you keep in mind the order of the little ideas, or details, in a paragraph, the main idea usually becomes clear.

Sometimes you find a sentence within a paragraph that states the main idea. Sometimes there is no one sentence that states the main idea. Instead, you discover the main idea by yourself. You read better when you put *your own mind* into the reading. The writer needs *you* as an interested reader before his words can have any meaning for you.

Here is a paragraph with the main idea stated in the opening sentence. The other sentences in the paragraph contain details related to the main idea.

Following the Spanish conquests, most of Central America was ruled as a single district. The capital was situated in the area now known as Guatemala. A powerful general was appointed by the Spanish to govern the entire district. He reported to the Viceroy of New Spain.

Which one of the following two sentences is related to the main idea of this paragraph?

1. The Spanish established firm control over the newly conquered territory.
2. New Spain and Spain are not the same countries.

If you chose the first, you are right. This is a fact that explains more clearly how Central America was ruled. The second one is true, but it does not relate directly to the main idea, the Spanish rule of Central America.

Your ability to see the relationship between main ideas and little ideas will help you as you read.

Now read some paragraphs that do not have sentences stating the main idea. Try to relate added facts to the main ideas you discover.

## Sea Otters

(A) In 1741, the sailing ship *Vitus Bering*, under the Russian flag, discovered sea otters floating off the Alaskan coast. The Russians soon found that Chinese mandarins would pay fabulous prices for the luxurious pelts, and the hunters began killing the graceful members of the weasel family as fast as their guns could fire. For more than 150 years, the fur of the sea otter was the most valuable commercial fur in the world.

(B) It was not long before others noted with interest the growing demand for otter pelts. From Boston or New York, Yankee skippers brought shirts, beads, and tools to trade with the Indians for sea otter pelts. Then the ships carried the pelts to China, where they were traded for silk and tea.

(C) This business was so profitable, and so many sea otters were killed, that by 1911 there were very few animals left. It was necessary for the fur-hunting nations to sign

an International Treaty to protect the small herds that remained. Many people thought the treaty came too late to save this valuable and interesting species. But one day in 1938 someone saw a group of sea otters floating in the kelp off the California coast. The sea otters had come back!

(D) Sea otters are about 3 to 5 feet long, and some weigh as much as 80 pounds. They travel in groups that are called "rafts" and range up and down the Pacific Coast from California north. They swim at about 10 or 12 miles an hour and never leave the water. At night, the raft sleeps in a bed of kelp. The otters tangle themselves in the long fronds and tentacles of the kelp to keep afloat.

(E) Their food consists mainly of shellfish and crabs, although once in a while they like to make a meal of small fish, octopus, or abalone. When the sea otter feeds, he dives to the bottom to fetch a

clam or a crab. Then, lying on his back, he breaks open the shell by pounding it against a flat rock he has placed on his chest.

(F) A young sea otter is called a "pup." Sometimes twins are born, but usually there is just a single pup born in the springtime. Although the pup has his teeth and fur and can swim immediately at

birth, his mother feeds him and protects him from the sea otter's enemies — the killer whales and sharks—for at least a year. Then he is off on his own.

(G) There are about 25,000 sea otters left in the world. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates there are about 800 off the California coast.



## PRACTICE

A. Answer the following questions to see how well you understood the main ideas in the article and the details that relate to them.

1. The main idea of Paragraph A is that the Russians made a great deal of money selling sea otter pelts to the Chinese. Which of the following sentences tell you more about this main idea?

(Choose three.)

- a. Russian hunters killed many sea otters.
- b. The Chinese prized the otter pelts.
- c. The fur of the sea otter was highly valued.
- d. Otters are members of the weasel family.

1. a, b, c

2. What is the main idea of Paragraph B?

- a. Other people were curious about Russia's trade with China.
- b. Yankees traded shirts, beads, and tools to the Indians in exchange for otter furs.
- c. Yankee skippers joined the profitable otter fur trade with China.
- d. Merchants traded the valuable pelts for Chinese silk and tea.

2. c

3. Which facts explain more fully the main idea of Paragraph B?

(Choose two.)

- a. The Yankee traders received silk and tea from China.
- b. Yankees traded shirts, beads, and tools to the Indians in exchange for otter furs.
- c. Boston and New York are cities in the United States.
- d. People from Boston and New York were called Yankees.

3. a, b

4. Because so few otters were left by 1911, an International Treaty was signed to protect the remaining sea otters.

Which of the following facts relate to this main idea? (Choose three.)

- a. Many otters had been killed because their furs were so valuable.
- b. The fur-hunting nations signed the treaty.
- c. The treaty came too late to do any good.
- d. Sea otters were saved from extinction.

4. a, b, d

5. Among the following sentences are the main ideas of the last four paragraphs. Match the letter of the paragraph with the sentence that states the main idea of that paragraph.

- a. Sea otters travel in groups in Pacific Coast waters from California northward.
- b. Today less than 4 per cent of the world's sea otters live off the coast of California.
- c. Sea otters lie on their backs when they eat.
- d. Sea otters eat mainly shellfish and crabs.
- e. The killer whale and the shark are two of the sea otter's enemies.
- f. Young "pups" are protected for a year by their mothers.

5. a. D

b. G

c. —

d. E

e. —

f. F

B. Look again at the four main ideas you just identified; then see how well you remember the details that explain them.

1. Young sea otters are called \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. pups
- b. lions
- c. cubs

1. a

2. Two of the enemies a mother sea otter protects

her baby from are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. squid
- b. sharks
- c. killer whales

2. b, c

3. Which of the following are facts about Pacific Coast sea otters?

(Choose four.)

- a. A group of otters is called a raft.
- b. Otters live most of their lives in the water but sleep on land.
- c. They are from 3 to 5 feet long.
- d. Kelp helps to keep the otters afloat when they are asleep.
- e. They can swim at the rate of 10 or 12 miles an hour.
- f. They weigh as much as 200 pounds.

3. a, c, d, e

4. An otter breaks open the shell of a crab or shellfish by \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. pounding it against a large rock on the ocean floor
- b. throwing it at a rock jutting out of the water
- c. pounding it on a rock which he holds on his chest

4. c

5. A mother sea otter usually has \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. one pup
- b. twin pups
- c. bald babies

5. a

Now you see how important it is to keep straight main ideas and the smaller ideas, or details, that relate to the main ideas. Don't mistake a detail for a main idea.

Continue to keep straight the main ideas and the smaller, related ideas. Then you won't get confused about the meaning of paragraphs you read.

You were able to check yourself as you went through this lesson. You know how well you are reading. Go on to the next lesson and find out how two contrasting ideas and their supporting details help to give a clearer picture of each other.



In much of your reading, you find ideas that seem to be quite different from each other and yet are mentioned together.

For instance, you might read about a poor boy who lived in a Western frontier town 100 years ago. The author of the story would want you, the reader, to sense fully the hunger and poverty of the boy. In order to do this, the author would write about more than the hunger and want the boy felt. He would do more than describe the conditions in which the boy lived.

For example, he might tell an incident in which the hungry boy came upon a group of people in town who were enjoying a good meal. Possibly these people would be having an outdoor feed, with meat roasting over an open fire, cornbread browning in bake-ovens, rich butter standing in open tubs, and fresh milk in pitchers filled to the brim. The strong smells, the sight of all the food, and the thought of eating to his heart's content would cause the hungry boy to feel hungrier than ever.

The contrast as described would point to the fact that the boy's hunger was almost paining him. You as the reader would feel the boy's hunger more fully because of the contrast between the boy's hunger and the townspeople's good meal.

Now read the following passages to find some more examples of contrast the writer has presented.

## PRACTICE

A. Today men can circle the globe in less than an hour and a half. In space capsules above the earth's atmosphere, astronauts have orbited the earth in unbelievably

short times. While many people were in their cars driving to work and others were watching three half-hour television shows, an astronaut traveled over 25,000 miles.

1. The main idea of the paragraph above is:

- a. Space capsules travel above the earth's atmosphere.
- b. Spacemen can orbit the earth in a very short time period.
- c. Many people drive their cars to work while others watch television.

1. b

2. The writer gives you some specific information to make this idea clear. What fact helps you understand the main idea?

- a. Astronauts have circled the earth in less than an hour and a half.
- b. It takes some people an hour and a half to drive to work.
- c. Astronauts have orbited the earth in space capsules.

2. a

3. The writer helps you in another way to understand what a short time it takes to orbit the earth. He compares the orbit time with the time it takes to do two other things. He says that it takes just as long for an astronaut to travel over 25,000 miles around the earth as it does \_\_\_\_\_. (Choose two.)

- a. to watch three television programs
- b. for an airplane to cross the continent
- c. for some people to get to work

3. a, c

By using these comparisons, the writer shows what he means by "unbelievably short times." He wants you to realize that, while one man is driving only a few miles on the ground or watching television briefly, another man is whizzing around the whole earth. This is a startling contrast.



B. The scattered Allied troops lay in the trenches, awaiting the certain attack. Silently men slipped the last of their clips into their rifles. They knew they could expect no help from the air. Nearly all available Allied planes were miles away, escorting the convoy of reinforcements through enemy waters. The few remaining aircraft

would be helpless against the air power of the enemy.

Overhead, enemy planes droned in monotonous rhythm, soon to be broken by death-dealing dives. In the moonlight, enemy tanks lurched toward the Allied lines. Behind them marched long rows of infantry-men. The moonlight glinted on the barrels of rifles and machine guns.

1. What do you know to be true of the Allied troops' condition? (Choose six.)

- a. They lacked sufficient air cover.
- b. They had rifles as weapons.
- c. They did not have much ammunition left.
- d. They were in trenches.
- e. They needed and were expecting reinforcements.
- f. They were wet and cold.
- g. The troops were scattered.

1. a, b, c, d, e, g

2. What words best describe the Allied troops?

- a. ill-equipped and facing defeat
- b. brave and hopefully awaiting air support
- c. tired and cold

2. a

The writer heightens further the hopelessness of the Allied prospects by describing the enemy. In contrast to the well-equipped enemy troops, the condition of the Allied troops appears to be even more hopeless. Let's look at actual examples of this contrast. Choose the best group of words for each statement.

3. The Allied troops knew that they could not expect their airplanes to help them, but the enemy \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. would probably have many planes
- b. planes would not be too destructive
- c. planes could already be heard flying overhead

3. c

4. The Allied troops were scattered, while the enemy troops were \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. united and numerous  
b. marching wearily  
c. awaiting reinforcements

4. a

5. The Allied troops were ill-equipped, but the enemy had \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. plenty of ammunition  
b. machine guns and tanks as well as rifles  
c. received supplies by air

5. b

6. The Allied troops were protected only by trenches, while the enemy \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. had the added protection of tanks  
b. were unprotected  
c. wore special bullet-proof uniforms

6. a



C. With a trembling step, the old man turned toward the faint light that flickered through the trees. Although no wind stirred, the biting cold struck through the threads of his shabby coat as though it were no better than a thin shirt. His feet were numb. His hands, which he took out of the pockets of his coat now and then to rub them together, ached with a dullness that would not leave them no matter how hard he rubbed. He knew that his nose was freezing and that his ears might suffer from frostbite.

He had been walking for nearly six hours without seeing a familiar part of the country. As darkness had fallen, he had realized he was lost in the woods. With the coming of night, the air had turned colder, much colder than it had been during the cloudcast day when he had walked across streams and by lakes that were thick with ice. He dared

not stop; yet he could only wander in the hope of finding help.

The light in the forest beckoned him. He stumbled over a tangle of fallen branches and almost fell. His feet seemed unable to carry him forward, but somehow he arrived at a clearing. In it was a wooden house with light coming from its windows. As he approached the front porch, he could see through a window a young man sitting by a roaring fire. There was a lamp on the table beside him. He was cleaning a rifle, taking a rag from a pile on the floor and polishing the barrel with loving care.

He was dressed in boots and dull-gray trousers. His light shirt was open at the throat and the sleeves were rolled high on his arms. He seemed relaxed and warm and content as he went about his work by the fire. The room looked inviting, as if the cold outside could not penetrate within.

1. The main point the writer is trying to impress upon you, the reader, is that \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. the old man shouldn't have traveled after dark
- b. the old man is extremely cold
- c. the young man is a hunter

1. b

2. What are some words the writer uses to get this point across?

(Choose five.)

- a. biting cold    b. numb    c. freezing
- d. frostbite    e. content    f. ice

2. a, b, c, d, f

3. Which details tell you directly about the old man's condition? (Choose four.)

- a. The biting cold struck through the threads of his shabby coat as though it were no better than a thin shirt.
- b. The light in the forest beckoned him.
- c. His hands ached with a dullness that would not leave them no matter how hard he rubbed.
- d. His nose was freezing.
- e. He had been walking for six hours.
- f. His ears might suffer frostbite.
- g. As darkness had fallen, he had realized he was lost in the woods.

3. a, c, d, f

4. Which sentence tells something that the old man could not possibly have done?

- a. He stumbled over a tangle of fallen branches and almost fell.
- b. He had been walking for nearly six hours without seeing a familiar part of the country.
- c. He was cleaning a rifle, taking a rag from a pile on the floor and polishing the barrel with loving care.

4. c

5. What do you know about the old man that indicates he couldn't have done this?

- His hands were numb and ached from the cold.
- He had no rifle.
- His gun was frozen.

5. a

6. Which of the following sentences contrast with the old man's condition? (Choose three.)

- He was sitting in front of a roaring fire.
- He wore a light shirt open at the throat and with the sleeves rolled high on his arms.
- He looked warm and content.
- His feet seemed unable to carry him forward.

6. a, b, c

7. Which type of clothing gives you the feeling that the wearer was warm?

- boots and trousers
- light shirt open at the throat
- threadbare coat

7. b

8. Who was dressed in this way?

- the old man
- the young man
- no one in the story

8. b

9. In what ways was the young man different from the old man? (Choose three.)

- He was relaxed and content.
- His fingers were warm and flexible.
- He was in a cozy, inviting atmosphere.
- He was a wealthier man.

9. a, b, c

10. What contrasting feeling did the writer use to make the old man seem even colder by comparison?

- a feeling of happiness
- a feeling of warmth
- a feeling of success

10. b

Seeing the Order  
of Events and Ideas

**The chick broke out of the eggshell.**

**The hen laid a large, white egg.**

Which of these two events do you think happened first? Often you have heard the question, "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?" The question suggests that one event may have come before the other, but we don't know which.

Most events you read about do come in a certain order, or sequence. You can tell which comes first, which follows it, and which ones come next. For example, in a story about a girl growing up, you know that she was eleven years old before her twelfth birthday. You know that she got out of bed in the morning before she did anything that day. She most likely ate breakfast before she went to school. She most likely ate supper after school. You can follow these details and events, keeping their order straight.

Not all events in a story are so easy to remember in order. But if you read carefully, you can find the correct sequence.



## PRACTICE

A. Read the following passage, keeping in mind what Walter did each day. Then answer the questions about the order in which he did things.

Walter never woke up in the morning without thinking of his favorite game—catching grasshoppers and putting them in glass jars. Each morning he would ask his mother if he could go out after breakfast to catch grasshoppers. On rainy days he would ask the same question.

When he had eaten breakfast and helped his mother wash dishes

or clean a part of the house, he would take the glass jar and walk slowly over the large lawn at the side of his house. He used the same jar every morning because the night before he would release the grasshoppers he had caught during the day. This was part of the game. He didn't want to keep the grasshoppers; he only wanted to see how many he could catch in a day.

1. Which one of the following did Walter do each morning before he did the other two things listed?
  - a. He ate breakfast.
  - b. He asked if he could catch grasshoppers.
  - c. He thought about catching grasshoppers.

1. c
2. When did he go out to catch the grasshoppers?
  - a. after dinner
  - b. after breakfast
  - c. before breakfast

2. b
3. When did Walter release the grasshoppers?
  - a. when the jars got full
  - b. every morning
  - c. at night

3. c
4. Which did Walter do first?
  - a. help clean the house
  - b. help wash the dishes
  - c. The passage doesn't say.

4. c

5. Number the following sentences in the order in which they happened during the day.

- a. Walter helped his mother. 5. a. 5
- b. Walter asked his mother if he could go out and catch grasshoppers. b. 3
- c. Walter woke up. c. 1
- d. Walter released any grasshoppers he had in the jars. d. 7
- e. Walter went out to catch grasshoppers. e. 6
- f. Walter thought about his favorite game. f. 2
- g. Walter ate his breakfast. g. 4

B. In the next selection, you will read about some incidents leading up to an important event. Keep in mind the sequence of these incidents as you read.

### "Irish Terriers" and "Crocker's Pets"

The tiny town of Promontory, in the Utah territory, was to be the most important spot in the United States on May 10, 1869. On that day the Union Pacific railroad, pushing west from Omaha, would meet the Central Pacific railroad, moving east from Sacramento.

Before that day arrived, however, there was work to be done! Laying the rails was a big job. Both railroads had mountains to cross. The Union Pacific went through the Rockies, while the Central Pacific had to get over the Sierra Nevada. There were hundreds of miles of barren land to conquer.

(A) Most of the laborers on the Union Pacific were Irish. One day in early 1869, these "Irish terriers" laid six miles of track, all by hand, for there were no machines to help. Men carried forward the lengths of rails, men fixed them in place, men swung the heavy sledges that drove the iron spikes home. Laying six miles of track in a single day was a great accomplishment.

(B) The Central Pacific employed Chinese rail hands. These laborers did not look very strong, but they could turn out a good day's work. In 1868 "Crocker's pets" had averaged a mile of track a working day.



When Charles Crocker, who was directing the Central Pacific laborers, heard about the feat of the "Irish terriers," he was determined to do better. To beat the Union Pacific, Crocker planned his operation as carefully as any general. Galloping horses brought the rails to the end-of-track on flatcars. As the loaded flatcars met the empty ones returning, men tipped the empty cars off the track, allowing the rails to go forward where other men unloaded them directly onto the waiting ties. Then the spikers hammered away.

(C) Crocker picked a day of fine weather, too, and began before the sun was up. By six o'clock in the

morning two miles of rail were spiked in place. There was a short halt for lunch, another for supper. When the men finally stopped, at sundown, they had laid *more than ten miles of track!*

(D) It was less than a month later when the railroads met. Two locomotives, a wood-burner from the west and a coal-burner from the east, stood nose to nose at Promontory. There was an elaborate ceremony, during which the final spike was driven home by Governor Stanford of California. The United States had rails from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, thanks to the "Irish terriers" and "Crocker's pets."

1. Number the following events in the order in which they happened.

- a. The Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads met at Promontory. 1. a. 4
- b. "Crocker's pets" laid ten miles of track in one day. b. 3
- c. The "Irish terriers" laid six miles of track in one day. c. 2
- d. "Crocker's pets" averaged a mile of track a day. d. 1
- e. Governor Stanford drove the final spike connecting the two railroads. e. 5

2. What is the main idea of Paragraph A?

- a. Most of the laborers on the Union Pacific were Irish.
- b. One day in early 1869 the "Irish terriers" laid six miles of track.
- c. Laying six miles of track in a single day was a great accomplishment. 2. b

3. What details tell you more about the main idea of Paragraph A? (Number them in the order in which they happened. Do not number the details that are unrelated to the main idea.)

- a. The laborers were mostly Irish. 3. a. —
- b. The Union Pacific had to go through the Rocky Mountains. b. —
- c. Men used sledges to drive the spikes into place. c. 3
- d. Men carried the rails to be laid to the end of the track. d. 1
- e. Some of the "Irish terriers" put the rails in place. e. 2

4. What is the main idea of Paragraph B?

- a. Charles Crocker planned his operation very carefully.
- b. Crocker wanted his men to beat the track-laying record of the Union Pacific.
- c. Charles Crocker directed the Central Pacific laborers.

4. b

5. What details tell you more about the main idea of Paragraph B? (Number them in the order that they happened. Don't number the unrelated details.)

- a. Flatcars pulled by horses took the rails to the end of the track.
- b. Men unloaded the rails, placing them directly on the ties ready to hammer into place.
- c. Men hammered spikes into the rails to hold them in place.
- d. Crocker was a general.
- e. During 1868 "Crocker's pets" laid an average of a mile of track a day.
- f. The laborers were mostly Chinese.

5. a. 1  
b. 2  
c. 3  
d. —  
e. —  
f. —

6. Which happened first?

- a. Men tipped the flatcars off the tracks.
- b. The empty flatcars returned for more rails
- c. The men unloaded the flatcars.

6. c

7. What is the main idea of Paragraph C?

- a. When the Chinese laborers started laying track, it was a nice day.
- b. "Crocker's pets" started to work before the sun was up.
- c. "Crocker's pets" laid more than ten miles of track in one day.

7. c

8. What details tell you more about the main idea of Paragraph C? (Number them in the order they happened. Do not number unrelated details.)

- a. There was a short stop for lunch.
- b. Work started before the sun was up.
- c. The laborers were Chinese.
- d. Ten miles of track had been laid.
- e. The men stopped briefly for dinner.
- f. Two miles of track had been laid before six o'clock.
- g. The men stopped work at sundown.

8. a. 3  
b. 1  
c. —  
d. 6  
e. 4  
f. 2  
g. 5

9. What is the main idea of Paragraph D?

- a. The two railroads met at Promontory, connecting the Atlantic and the Pacific by rail.
- b. Governor Stanford of California drove home the final spike.
- c. The United States will always be grateful to "Crocker's pets" and the "Irish terriers."

9. a

10. What details tell you more about the main idea of Paragraph D? (Number them in the order they happened. Do not number unrelated details.)

- a. "Crocker's pets" had beaten the track-laying record of the "Irish terriers."
- b. The ceremony marking the meeting of the two railroads began.
- c. The Central Pacific had to cross the Sierra Nevada Mountains.
- d. A locomotive from the Union Pacific Railroad met a locomotive from the Central Pacific Railroad.
- e. Governor Stanford of California drove in the spike connecting the two railroads.

10. a. —  
b. 2  
c. —  
d. 1  
e. 3

LESSON **11** Steps in Order

Have you ever followed written instructions telling you how to put something together? Possibly you have built a plastic model from a kit with all the separate parts. With these parts and some special glue, you read the directions, taking each step as it was outlined for you. Perhaps you got into trouble by making some little mistake in sequence, such as gluing the wheels onto a car axle before inserting the axle into the little holes that keep it in position.

You may have followed instructions for making a cake and found that when you added milk and flour before the sugar and butter were completely mixed, your cake was spoiled because you didn't take each step in order.

In the frontier days of the old West, there was no electricity, and the only light for reading was candlelight. Every member of the family was expert at making candles. Here is a short list of instructions for making your own candle. Would you be able to follow them?

1. Melt 1 pound of paraffin wax and pour it into a tall, thin can or other container.
2. Dip a braided string into the wax. Be sure all the string is wet with wax. Remove the string and hold it straight until the wax coating has hardened. The string should remain straight. If it curls, repeat the process until the string stays straight.
3. Dip the straight string into the wax. Remove the string and wait until the thin coating of wax has hardened. Repeat this process, thickening the candle each time.
4. If the wax in the can becomes too thick, apply more heat.
5. Continue dipping until candle is the desired thickness.

Of course, the only way to prove to yourself that you could follow these instructions is to make a candle. However, without doing that, let's see if you read the instructions correctly.

What should you do if the string curls after you dip it in the wax?

- a. Dip it in again. Remove it and hold it straight until the wax hardens and it stays straight.
- b. Warm the wax.
- c. Wait for the wax to dry. The string will straighten itself.

If you chose *a*, you are right. You know why *a* is right because either you remembered the steps necessary or you reread the instructions and found the correct answer.

## PRACTICE

A. Below are instructions for putting together part of a model car. Read them carefully and then answer the questions that follow.

1. Place the left and right frame rails across from each other on a table or other flat surface. Be sure that the two rails are running the same way (that they are parallel). Snap the bottom of the engine mount into the holes at the front and back ends of the frame rails.
2. Apply a thin coat of cement to the top of the engine mount and place the engine block in position with the radiator to the front. Place a book or other weight on top of the engine and allow cement to dry thoroughly.
3. Cement the front axle halves together. Cement the rear axle halves together. Allow them to dry thoroughly.
4. Snap the front axle into the slots at the front of the frame rails. Snap the rear axle into the slots at the back of the frame rails. Apply cement to the front and rear tips of the frame rails and place the body frame in position. Be sure that the axles



will rotate after the body frame is in position. Place a weight on the roof of the body until the frame is cemented to the frame rails.

5. Place a drop of cement on the tips of the front and rear axles and adjust the wheels in place. Place the car upside down and allow the cement to dry.

1. Here are three of the steps in the directions you read. Which step should be done first?
  - a. The axles should be snapped into place.
  - b. The wheels should be attached to the axles.
  - c. The axle halves should be cemented together. 1. c
2. In what position should the engine block be placed?
  - a. with the radiator toward the front
  - b. with the radiator toward the rear
  - c. some other way 2. a

3. What should be done before the wheels are put on the axles?

- a. The wheels should be cemented to the body frames.
- b. The wheels should be tested to make sure they turn.
- c. The axles should be glued to the body frame.

3. c

4. What is the last thing to be put on the car?

- a. the wheels
- b. the axles
- c. the engine block

4. a

B. Answer these questions about the steps to follow in putting together a model car.

1. What step does not belong in the following sequence of instructions?

- a. Cement the front axle halves together.
- b. Cement the rear axle halves together.
- c. Place a book on top of them.
- d. Allow them to dry thoroughly.

1. c

2. The following steps are not in the correct order. Number them correctly.

- a. Place the engine mount on the frame rails by snapping it into the holes at the front and back of the frame rails.
- b. Place the frame rails across from each other in a parallel position.
- c. Place the engine block on the engine mount.
- d. Put a thin coat of cement on the engine mount.
- e. Place a weight on top of the engine and allow the cement to dry thoroughly.

2. a. 2

b. 1

c. 4

d. 3

e. 5

3. Refer to the instructions and number the following steps in their proper order.

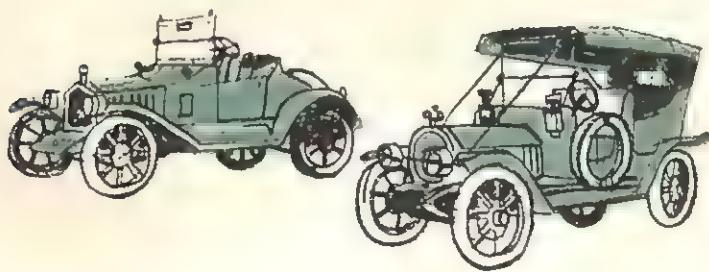
- Check the axles to make sure that they will rotate.
- Put the axles on the frame by snapping them into the slots on the rails.
- Cement the wheels in place.
- Cement the body frame in place.
- Cement the axle halves together.
- Place a weight on the roof until the body frame is cemented to the rails.

3. a. 4  
b. 2  
c. 6  
d. 3  
e. 1  
f. 5

4. Which of the following is an incorrectly stated step?

- Place the frame rails on a flat surface so that they touch each other.
- When you finish, turn the car upside down.
- Adjust the wheels in place before the cement is thoroughly dry.

4. a



Many times you will have to read directions for putting things together or for operating something. Keep in mind the steps as you read. See how they follow one another. See how each one depends on the one before it.

Reading directions is part of reading comprehension. As you improve your ability to follow printed directions, you are improving your **reading comprehension**.

Here is a chance to prove to yourself that you can really use your reading skills. Read the article about the famous lady and see how well you can understand and remember what you read.

### Miss Liberty

In spite of a wind-driven rain and choppy waves that beat against the ship, the passengers crowded onto the deck. They strained their eyes for their first glimpse of the light. There it was, shining brightly and unwaveringly! All around it the rain and wind swirled in the inky darkness, but the torch glowed steadily on.

The Statue of Liberty welcomed the homecomers and visitors alike. Standing on Liberty Island in New York City's harbor with torch held high, she seemed to be proclaiming to all that this is the land of the free. The passengers talked excitedly in the noisy storm.

Miss Liberty came to the United States from another freedom-loving people, the citizens of France. The French people presented her to congratulate the United States on the one-hundredth anniversary of

the signing of the Declaration of Independence. President Cleveland accepted it on behalf of the United States.

When the statue reached New York in 1885, there was a great celebration. But Miss Liberty could not be put up until a base was built for her to stand on. More than 100,000 United States citizens sent in pennies, nickels, and dimes until there was enough money to build the base.

(A) At first the statue was called "Liberty Enlightening the World." Later the name was shortened to the "Statue of Liberty." The statue represents the figure of a woman. She is dressed in flowing robes and stands among broken chains. In her upraised right hand, she holds a torch, whose light burns from sunset to sunrise. In her left hand is a law book with the date July 4, 1776.

(B) The Statue of Liberty is the largest statue in the world. From the base to the torch, she stands 305 feet high and weighs 225 tons. Her head alone is as tall as a two-story building. A child could lie on her nose. And two grown men, standing one on top of the other, would not be as tall as the length of her first finger.

Visitors standing at the base of the statue feel like Gulliver's tiny Lilliputian people. The hardier ones can climb the 500 stairs inside the statue to peer out from the windows in her crown. Sightseers used to be able to climb the stairs up into the torch, but this is no longer permitted.

(C) Time has not dimmed Miss Liberty's beauty. The rubbing of



the wind and rain has turned her shiny exterior into an attractive patina, or coating, of light green. Some years ago she was given a thorough inspection for flaws. The spikes in her crown were set in new iron frames. Later a heating system was installed to keep her feet dry.

Today the Statue of Liberty is loved by all Americans. Her torch sends light over the dark waters to beckon the travelers home and to lead others to her shores. Emma Lazarus, the American poetess, wrote these words which are engraved on the statue's pedestal:

Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost, to me.  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

## PRACTICE

A. Answer the following questions about the Statue of Liberty's placement in New York City's harbor to see if you understood the events which led up to Miss Liberty's arrival.

1. Which event happened first?
  - a. The Declaration of Independence was signed.
  - b. President Cleveland accepted the statue.
  - c. A base for the statue was built.

1. a
2. Why did France give the Statue of Liberty to the United States?
  - a. to celebrate President Cleveland's election
  - b. to congratulate the people of the United States on the recent signing of the Declaration of Independence
  - c. to congratulate the people of the United States on the hundredth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence

2. c

3. Number the following events in the order in which they happened.

- a. President Cleveland accepted the statue on behalf of the United States. 3. a. 2
- b. A base was built for the statue to stand on. b. 5
- c. The statue was placed in New York City's harbor on Liberty Island. c. 6
- d. People celebrated the statue's arrival in New York. d. 3
- e. Citizens of the United States contributed money to build a base for Miss Liberty to stand on. e. 4
- f. The citizens of France presented the Statue of Liberty to the United States. f. 1
- g. Later the statue became known by the name of the Statue of Liberty. g. 7

B. Now let's see what you learned about the Statue itself.

1. What is the main idea presented in Paragraph A?

- a. The statue was first called, "Liberty Enlightening the World." 1. b
- b. The statue, which represents the figure of a woman, is called the "Statue of Liberty."
- c. The torch in the statue's right hand burns from sunset to sunrise.

2. What is the main idea of Paragraph B?

- a. The Statue of Liberty is the largest statue in the world.
- b. A child could lie on Miss Liberty's nose.
- c. The statue's head is as tall as a two-story building.
- d. From the base to the torch, she stands 305 feet high and weighs 225 tons. 2. a

3. What is the main idea of Paragraph C?

- a. Miss Liberty now has a glossy coat of light green.
- b. Miss Liberty has withstood the test of time and is still in good condition.
- c. Recently Miss Liberty was improved in many ways.

3. b

4. What other details about the Statue of Liberty did you learn in Paragraphs A, B, and C? (Choose eight.)

- a. The statue is 305 feet tall.
- b. Originally the statue was called, "Liberty Enlightening the World."
- c. Storms have badly battered the statue's exterior.
- d. Recently the spikes from her crown were removed because they were a threat to the safety of the sightseers.
- e. The statue's head is very large.
- f. In one hand Miss Liberty holds a torch and in the other hand she holds a copy of the Declaration of Independence.
- g. Miss Liberty is dressed in flowing robes, and broken chains are under her feet.
- h. The statue has been inspected and some improvements made.
- i. A heater now keeps her feet dry.
- j. The law book in her left hand has on it the date of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.
- k. Her exterior is now light green.

4. a, b, e, g, h, i, j, k

C. Did you notice how the writer used comparison and contrast to help you to visualize certain things? Answer the next questions to prove to yourself that you understand the writer's use of comparison and contrast.

1. How did the writer want you to picture the light?

- a. shining brightly and steadily
- b. blinking uncertainly
- c. glowing faintly

1. a

2. What contrasts strikingly with the light and emphasizes its brightness and steadiness by comparison? (Choose three.)

- a. The passengers crowded to the deck.
- b. The wind and rain were swirling.
- c. The night was black.
- d. The storm made choppy waves rise to hit the ship.

2. b, c, d

3. In Paragraph B the main thing the writer wants you to understand is \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. the size of the statue
- b. how the statue looks
- c. how much the statue weighs

3. a

4. What comparisons does the writer make to help you get this main idea? (Choose four.)

- a. The statue's head is the same height as a two-story building.
- b. There are windows in her crown.
- c. Her nose is big enough for a child to lie on.
- d. People look like tiny creatures next to the mammoth statue.
- e. Her first finger is longer than the height of two men put together.

4. a, c, d, e

The following article about pancake restaurants appeared recently in a newspaper. Read it carefully. Then answer the questions that follow it.

(A) The pancake is a food that knows no national boundaries. The French, Germans, Mexicans, Chinese, and Scandinavians all have their favorite versions of this delicacy. Here in America special pancake restaurants make available over thirty-five varieties to customers who come to eat them morning, noon, and night. Children particularly love them. If you were to read the menu carefully, you would find many different names for the familiar pancake: flapjacks, crepes, blintzes, buckwheat cakes, and pancakes made from potatoes are just a few of the national specialties of these restaurants.

(B) There are many reasons for the rapid growth of these restaurants, but the chance to sample the

pancakes of other countries is largely responsible for their popularity. The restaurants can offer this great variety of pancakes because they have large kitchens, the latest equipment, and many people helping to prepare and serve the meals. Imagine how difficult it would be for mothers to make a different kind of pancake for each member of the family in their kitchens at home. Just think of all the different ingredients they would need for each recipe, not to mention all the bowls and griddles, plus the thirty-five different recipes! Perhaps you can see why in the past three years pancake restaurants have been opening up at the rate of one each week! You can sample your favorite recipe today.

1. The main idea of Paragraph A is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. what pancakes are made of
  - b. the history of pancakes
  - c. pancake favorites of many nations

2. The main idea of Paragraph B is \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. pancake favorites of many nations  
b. reasons for the increasing number of these restaurants  
c. how to make pancakes at home

3. The contrast between making pancakes in a restaurant and a home kitchen was used in this story as a way of showing \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. the difference between pancakes of many nations  
b. why people of all ages like pancakes  
c. why it is easier for a restaurant than for a housewife to make many varieties of pancakes

4. Contrast is often used to \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. fill up space  
b. bring in new facts  
c. emphasize the main idea

5. Which of the following facts taken from this story does *not* explain more fully why pancakes are a favorite of many nations?  
a. One pancake restaurant opens every week.  
b. Pancakes can be eaten any time.  
c. Children love pancakes.

6. Which of the following is *not* the name of a pancake mentioned in this article?  
a. blintz                    c. buckwheat  
b. berry                    d. crepe

7. How many pancake restaurants have been built in the last three years? Choose the number which comes closest to the information given in the newspaper story.  
a. 50    b. 150    c. 250    d. 350

8. What three facts in this article are used to illustrate how hard it would be to make a variety of pancakes at one time in your own kitchen?

- a. Children love them.
- b. You need a menu.
- c. You need many different recipes.
- d. They can be eaten any time.
- e. They cross national boundaries.
- f. You need many bowls and griddles.
- g. They are a national delicacy.
- h. You need many ingredients.

Read carefully the following recipe for pancakes.

Begin by heating up your griddle. In a bowl place 2 cups of biscuit mix. Add 1 egg and 2 cups of milk. Stir until batter is smooth. Place a spoonful of batter on the hot griddle. Turn the pancake over when bubbles appear on top.

Below is a list of cooking steps. Five apply to this recipe and five do not. Arrange the steps that do apply in the correct sequence. Pay no attention to those that do not apply to the recipe for pancakes.

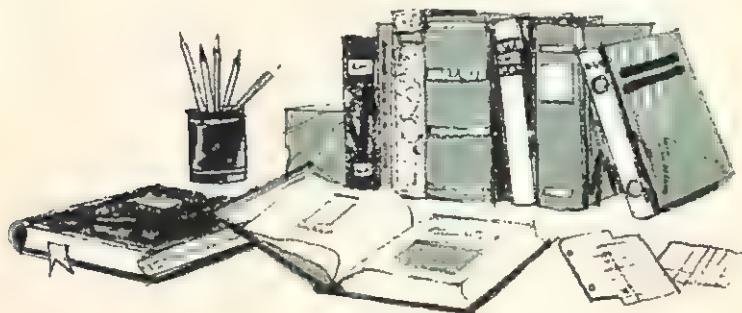
9. a. Add salt and pepper.  
b. Put biscuit mix into bowl.  
c. Heat oven to 450 degrees.  
d. Knead gently.  
e. Spoon batter on hot griddle.  
f. Add egg and milk.  
g. Beat vigorously.  
h. Add sugar.  
i. Heat griddle.  
j. Turn pancake over.

10. There is one step missing from the above sequence that was found in the original recipe. Which is it?

- Serve with butter and syrup.
- Keep pancakes hot.
- Make sure griddle is hot.
- Beat batter until smooth.

11. The instructions say to turn the pancake over when \_\_\_\_\_.

- it is brown on top
- it is brown underneath
- exactly three minutes have gone by
- bubbles appear on the top



**Reviewing Skills**

|      |            |             |
|------|------------|-------------|
| 1. c | 5. a       | 9. i, b, f, |
| 2. b | 6. b       | e, j        |
| 3. c | 7. b       | 10. d       |
| 4. c | 8. c, f, h | 11. d       |

## Echo

Long ago, across the sea in Greece, lived a very beautiful girl. Bright and carefree, she loved to walk through the woodlands and meadows that covered the lower slopes of the mountains near her home. Her name was Echo.

One spring day, when Echo was out gathering wildflowers, she chanced upon Zeus, king of the Greek gods. He had been up to some sort of prank that he didn't want his wife, Hera, to find out about. Echo had not gone much further when she came upon Hera, searching for Zeus. Hera looked very angry. Poor Zeus! thought Echo to herself. I must help him. With that, she went up to Hera and started talking to her. She talked and talked until she was sure that enough time had passed for Zeus to make good his escape.

At length Hera came to her senses. Her husband had been able to get away. She had been tricked by this young girl and she was very angry.

"That mischievous tongue of yours has caused me to be tricked, Echo," she cried. "From now on, as punishment, you shall have only the briefest use of speech."

Hera, of course, was a goddess. She had the power to make good her threat. From that time on, Echo was able only to reply when someone else had spoken first. Poor Echo! She had liked so much to talk. Now all she could do was repeat the last few words of what she heard.

Not long after this had taken place, Echo was out walking in the woods. Suddenly, through a gap in the trees, she caught sight of Narcissus. He was the handsomest boy she had ever seen. At once she was inflamed with love. She followed him stealthily, waiting for a chance to show herself and to speak. Just as a prairie fire sweeps over the bushes and dry grass, even so the flame of love kindled in Echo's heart. How she longed to call out to him! How she wished she might

approach him with warm-hearted, winning words! Because of Hera's punishment, she could not. All she could do was wait.

At length, Narcissus stopped and looked around. Where were his companions? For that matter, where was he? Had he become lost? A sudden panic seized him. He didn't want to be left alone in a strange

part of the wooded mountainside. Cupping his hands to his mouth, he called out loudly, "Is anyone here?"

"Here," answered Echo, who had been waiting for just such an opportunity.

Narcissus stood amazed. This was not the voice of one of his companions. He looked in all directions but saw no one.



"It is I," he called.

"It is I," came back the answer.

"Come," he said.

"Come," replied Echo. A flush spread over her face. Her heart was pounding.

"Let us meet," called Narcissus.

"Let us meet," responded Echo from the depths of her heart. How she had longed to hear these words! How eagerly she answered! Without waiting another moment, she rushed out into the clearing where Narcissus stood. She could wait no longer to throw her arms around him.

Narcissus was dismayed. It was a girl who had been calling to him. He didn't like girls. Besides, he was too proud of his own handsome features to admit that any girl could be good enough for him.

1. Who took away all but a bit of Echo's power to speak?

- a. Zeus
- b. Hera
- c. Narcissus

1. b

2. Which of the following words does *not* describe Echo?

- a. talkative
- b. hardhearted
- c. warmhearted

2. b

3. In what country did Echo live?

3. Greece

Without a moment's hesitation, he turned and fled into the woods.

"Never," he called back, as he ran, "shall I love you."

"I love you," Echo replied.

Oh, the humiliation she felt at being scorned! Oh, the heartbreak of a love not returned! Tears welled up in Echo's eyes. She threw herself down onto the ground and wept. Sob after sob convulsed her poor body. Long hours she lay there, overcome by grief. She forgot about food. She paid no attention to the passing of time. All she could think of was Narcissus and her love that had been spurned.

As the days went by, the poor girl's body wasted away. No longer was she seen upon the mountainsides. Only her voice remained.



**When oil is pumped from underground,  
it is fed into huge drums.**

**Following this, the drums are shipped  
all over the world.**

These two sentences tell about the shipping of oil. Can you tell whether the drums are shipped all over the world when they are empty or when they are full?

Of course you know the answer. They are shipped when they are full.

How do you know this? You know it because the words *following this* mean the shipping takes place *after* the drums are filled. Such words as *following this* or *next* or *after that* tell you that one event follows another.

In your reading, use these word signals to help you keep straight in your mind the order of events. The signals act as links between sentences, joining them into a logical chain of events that is easy to understand.

## PRACTICE

A. Read each group of three events below. Decide which happened *first*. Then decide which event happened *next*. Finally, decide which event happened *last*.

### Group 1

- a. Samuel Slater boarded a ship which was bound for New York.
- b. Samuel Slater wanted to start his own textile mill in England but lacked the money to undertake this venture.
- c. Reading an article in a Philadelphia newspaper about a man who received a reward for designing a textile machine, Slater determined to go to the United States.

1. a. **last**

b. **first**

c. **next**

### Group 2

- a. With a flying leap Bonnie's Pal bolted out of the starting gate, leading the field of eight thoroughbreds.
- b. At the first turn Bonnie's Pal fell back to third place despite her jockey's insistent urging.
- c. Racing across the finish line, Bonnie's Pal won by a nose.

2. a. **first**

b. **next**

c. **last**

### Group 3

- a. Sailors did not want to learn about the machinery involved in this revolutionary new method of propelling ships and, therefore, fought the conversion from sails to steam.
- b. It was discovered that steam could drive a ship, replacing sails and wind power.
- c. Over many protests the Congress of the United States ordered two vessels to be equipped with steam power as an experiment.

3. a. **next**

b. **first**

c. **last**

B. As you read the article about the brilliant and sensitive Dr. Schweitzer, keep in mind the sequence of the events presented. Notice how some events or incidents cause certain things to happen to Dr. Schweitzer.

## Albert Schweitzer

Dr. Albert Schweitzer, who lives in a hospital in the lonely African jungle, has devoted his life to the service of his fellow men. The man whose kindly face is crowned with thick, unruly white hair is known to the natives as "Doctor." He heals the sick, gives advice, and lends a helping hand everywhere. In other parts of the world, he is known as a great writer, a great thinker, and a great musician. His books have been translated into

many languages; his organ recordings are played everywhere.

Albert Schweitzer was born in 1875 in the little country of Alsace, which lies between France and Germany and was then part of Germany. The son of a minister, he had a happy childhood, but he always worried about the poor and the sick. He promised himself he would enjoy his blessings until he was thirty years old. From then on he would devote his life to helping others.



Albert Schweitzer kept that promise. He studied medicine and went to Africa to help the natives. He set up his hospital at Lambaréné.

At first the natives were unfriendly, but none was warlike nor were they cannibals. Twenty years earlier, when the first colonists had arrived in Africa, they had found cannibals living in the country. But there were no cannibals by the time Dr. Schweitzer came.

Dr. Schweitzer, always of a cheerful nature, gradually won the natives over. Soon the natives began to help him build his hospital and to bring their sick to his door. Slowly they learned to trust the white man, then to love him.

When World War I came, Dr. Schweitzer was saddened to think of men killing each other. He wrote *Reverence for Life*, which is a plea to all men never to destroy life except to obtain food or to protect loved ones.

Then, because his native Alsace was part of Germany and he was

considered to be German, he was taken prisoner of war by the Allies in Africa. He was forbidden to practice medicine and had to leave his jungle hospital for a prison camp. In the prison camp Dr. Schweitzer spent many long hours writing, trying to persuade people to be kind and to love one another and all of life.

After the war he returned to the native hospital at Lambaréné. By then people had read his books, listened to him speak, and heard his organ recitals. He was famous. People gave money and medicine to his hospital. Other doctors and nurses joined him in Africa. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in helping mankind. He also received the British honorary Order of Merit.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer has had a life filled with excitement and adventure. Yet he has fired no guns, killed no enemies. His only weapons have been his faith, his courage, and his reverence for life.

Now answer the questions about the life of Albert Schweitzer. They will show you how much you learned about Dr. Schweitzer and will also check your understanding of the causes and effects of certain events as well as their sequence.

1. Dr. Schweitzer went to Africa \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. to teach the natives how to get along with the rest of the world
- b. to establish a hospital for natives
- c. because he wanted to study medicine

1. b

2. As a result of his concern for sick and unfortunate people, Dr. Schweitzer \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. had a happy childhood  
b. became a minister  
c. promised he would help others after he was thirty years old

2. c

3. Besides being a great doctor, Dr. Schweitzer is also famous as \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Choose three.)  
a. a great thinker      b. an explorer  
c. a musician      d. an author

3. a, c, d

4. Because of his unselfish devotion to others, he \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. was taken prisoner during World War I  
b. was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize  
c. made many organ recordings

4. b

5. Cannibals lived in Africa \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. before Dr. Schweitzer went there  
b. when Dr. Schweitzer first arrived there  
c. after World War I when Dr. Schweitzer returned to Africa

5. a

6. Which of the following happened first?  
a. The natives learned to trust the doctor.  
b. The natives came to love the doctor.  
c. Some of the natives became doctors.

6. a

7. What caused Dr. Schweitzer to write *Reverence for Life*?

- a. He wanted more people to become doctors.
- b. He wanted people to realize that killing was needless.
- c. He wanted to protect his loved ones.

7. b

8. As a result of World War I, Dr. Schweitzer \_\_\_\_\_.

(Choose three.)

- a. was forced to leave his native hospital
- b. wrote many books, trying to convince people to love
- c. was taken prisoner
- d. learned to play the organ

8. a, b, c

9. People sent money to Dr. Schweitzer to help his hospital \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. when he first went to Africa
- b. when World War I began
- c. after World War I when he returned to the hospital

9. c

10. Dr. Schweitzer was famous \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. when he was a boy
- b. by the time he returned to Africa after the war
- c. by 1900

10. b

Paragraphs are made up of sentences that are linked together in some way. This is how meanings are related in paragraphs. Look for sentence links like *at first*, *soon*, *after this*, and others. These help you comprehend the logical order of events in what you read.

Now go on to the next lesson to learn more about getting meaning from paragraphs.

# LESSON 16 Details Add Meaning

"What did you do on your trip last summer?" asked Mary Jane of her friend Janet.

"Oh, we had a wonderful time," answered Janet.

You may have heard a conversation like this. Possibly you have told someone that something was "wonderful." In your reading you may find a statement such as Janet's. It gives a general impression.

But the general impression tells very little unless particular ideas or details are added to it. These details show what the word *wonderful* really means.

If Janet told of her ride to some place with breathtaking scenery, such as the Smoky Mountains of Virginia or the Grand Canyon in Arizona, then this would help to define her meaning of *wonderful*.

If you read of someone's airplane trip over the Rocky Mountains and you are told that the scenery was "wonderful," you don't know very much. However, if the writer tells you that the highest peaks were capped with white snow, which made the dark rocks and forests below stand out more sharply, you begin to understand what he means by *wonderful*. He might mention the threadlike roads and streams, or the night-time lights of towns looking like scattered jewels sparkling on a great black rug.

Additional information like this would lead you to understand what the writer means by *wonderful*. You might not agree with him, but the details he gives would define his use of the word.

There are other general words that you read like *beautiful*, *easy*, or *hard*. To have them mean something, look for the details the writer gives you to show more exactly what he means when he uses these words.

## PRACTICE

A. After each number you will find a statement made by a person. The statement tells you the person's general impression of something. The lettered sentences that follow each statement are particular facts or ideas. Read them and choose the letters of the added details the person might have used to explain his general statement.

1. "Taking pictures with this new camera is easy," said the announcer. (Choose five.)

- a. "The film is already loaded in the film cartridge, which you slide into the camera."
- b. "Just press a button to take the picture."
- c. "There are no adjustments to make; no focusing is needed."
- d. "You need to understand exactly what happens to the film when light hits it."
- e. "After you shoot the last picture, just take out the film cartridge; there's no rewinding."
- f. "The camera is so automatic that it takes all the guesswork out of picture-taking."

1. a, b, c, e, f

2. "Kathy is nice," Susan stated. (Choose four.)

- a. "She has three little sisters."
- b. "She says hello to everyone she meets between classes."
- c. "She wears her hair in a pony tail."
- d. "I've never heard her say anything mean about anyone."
- e. "Once she helped me pick up some books I'd dropped."
- f. "She always has a smile on her face."

2. b, d, e, f

3. "The party was fun," said Jeff. (Choose four.)

- a. "We had lots of good things to eat."
- b. "I went to another party last weekend."
- c. "My mother says I can have a party sometime soon."
- d. "Laurie played some great new records."
- e. "All my friends were there."
- f. "We laughed so hard at Ted's ventriloquist act that we were practically rolling on the floor."

3. a, d, e, f

4. "Swimming is hard," said Tom. (Choose three.)

- a. "When I put my feet up, my head goes under water."
- b. "I floated without assistance the first time I tried."
- c. "You need to learn to breathe at the proper time."
- d. "Kicking my legs so fast makes me tired."
- e. "I am eager to learn how to dive correctly."

4. a, c, d



B. Read the following groups of three statements. Each group expresses particular facts or ideas that give you a definite general impression. Then choose the general impression you get from the details that are given.

1. A frown wrinkled his forehead, and he clenched his teeth together. His face got red and dripped with perspiration. After five minutes of strenuous effort, he had to sit down for a rest. "This is \_\_\_\_\_," he said to his friend.

a. fun b. dangerous c. hard

1. c

2. Her long hair was wound into a golden coil which perched on the top of her head. Her clear blue eyes and even white teeth glittered as she smiled. Excitement made her smooth cheeks rosy.

"She's \_\_\_\_\_," said a young man.

a. nice b. pretty c. funny

2. b

3. "When there is a highway connecting two towns, you can get from one town to the other quickly. Supplies and products travel over our modern highways. Roads have helped bring the world closer together. "Highways are very \_\_\_\_\_," said the road commissioner.

a. pretty b. useful c. modern

3. b

4. Over one of the little dog's eyes a party hat was tilted. Long streamers trailed over his face and hid it from sight. Every once in a while a little pink tongue would push a streamer to one side and pop into view. "That dog looks \_\_\_\_\_," the girl said.

a. helpless b. mad c. funny

4. c

C. As you read the selection about the Haida Indians, you can see how a writer presents a general idea and then gives actual details to show what he means.

### **Totem Pole Country**

On Vancouver Island in western Canada, the Haida (HI-da) Indians live in a beautiful setting. In some places the country is wild and natural as it was hundreds of years ago. There are high mountains and quiet valleys; there are thick, green forests. In the streams swim numerous fish, and the woods are still the home of a great variety of animals. Waterfalls tumble into clear, cool pools which sparkle in the sun.

The Haidas speak of their families in ways that are strange to us. They use the names of animals in almost the same way that we use family, or last, names. When a Haida Indian talks about his family, he uses pictures or carvings of different animals to stand for different branches of his family.

The animal pictures and carvings are symbols. The Haida would not say, "My grandmother is Mrs.



Beaver," but he would say that the beaver is the animal his grandmother's family chose for its own image. The animal that stands for a family was chosen long ago, but it is passed down to children and grandchildren. When the family first chose its animal symbol, it chose the animal that it thought would help the family members the most. Some animals were chosen because they were strong; others because they were clever; others because they were industrious.

Totem poles are important to the Haidas. A totem pole is a tall piece of wood which has been carved into special shapes to represent a family tree. It shows animals one above another. The animal at the bottom of the pole stands for the oldest branch of the family, perhaps great-great-grandfather's

family. At the top is the animal that stands for the family now living. Each Haida family proudly displays its totem pole outside the house where everyone can see it.

To a visitor the animal carvings look a little peculiar. A totem pole beaver will have teeth that are huge—larger even than the beaver's paws and legs. A totem pole whale may have an oversized fin. The Haida carvers purposely emphasize the parts of the animal's body that are most important to that particular animal. Because the beaver uses his teeth to build his home and because they are a prominent feature, the Haida carver calls attention to them by making them very large. The whale uses his fin when swimming, so the size of the whale's fin on the totem pole emphasizes its importance.

One word answers each question. Choose the word that the writer uses in the article.

1. What kind of country do the Haida Indians live in? (What general term does the writer use to describe it?)
2. How does the way the Haidas speak of their families seem to us?
3. What are the animal carvings and pictures?
4. How do the totem pole carvings look to visitors?

1. beautiful

2. strange

3. symbols

4. peculiar

D. In the exercise above, you showed that you understand the general ideas the writer presents. Now see if you can remember the actual facts that show what the writer means by the general terms.

1. Which details below show what the writer means by "beautiful setting"? (Choose four.)
  - a. There are high mountains.
  - b. There are quiet valleys.
  - c. Many fishermen go there.
  - d. Forests are green and full of trees.
  - e. Waterfalls spill into beautiful pools.
  - f. It is part of Canada.

1. a, b, d, e
2. What do the Haidas use for family names?
  - a. the names of their totem poles
  - b. the names that visitors gave to them
  - c. the names of animals

2. c
3. Why did the Haidas choose certain animals to stand for their families?
  - a. They thought those animals would be most helpful to the families.
  - b. They wanted a symbol.
  - c. They liked the names of the animals.

3. a
4. What do totem poles show?
  - a. how important a family is
  - b. how animals really look
  - c. the family trees of the Haidas

4. c
5. Why does a Haida carver make a certain part of a particular animal bigger than it really is?
  - a. to show the importance of that part of the body to that animal
  - b. to make it look peculiar
  - c. to attract visitors to the island

5. a

After a writer has presented a main idea, he will often give an example to illustrate the important point he is trying to make.

For instance, the main idea of a selection might be as follows: In a crowded city, people must cross the street only at corners.

The writer might go on to tell about a person who started to cross a busy street in the middle of a block and narrowly missed being hit by a car that was pulling out of a parking place. This particular event, or incident, would illustrate the importance of the main idea and help to explain it. You see why it is so important to cross the street at corners.

A main idea may be easy to understand, but you get much more meaning when it is supported by a lively example.

### PRACTICE

A. Read the four paragraphs that follow. Decide what the main idea of each one is. Later you will be asked to match each paragraph with an incident that illustrates the main idea, so be sure you know what each main idea is.

(A) Swimmers splash water out of pools, making the walkways wet and slippery. People walking around the edge of the pool should walk with care. It is very easy to slip and fall on wet cement. Many accidents occur that way. It is never wise to run on slippery cement.

(B) Because small children may be wandering around alone in the vicinity of a pool, some arrangements must be made to guard against the possibility of accidental drownings. A fence around the pool area is a good way to keep children at a safe distance from the water.



(C) Emigrants, eager to get to California as quickly as possible, often chose to try newly discovered "short cuts" instead of keeping on the well-known and safe California Trail. Wagon trains ran into many difficulties venturing over untried routes, and lives and possessions were tragically lost.

(D) On the trail, parties of pioneers ran things in a democratic manner. Before beginning the journey west, the men in a wagon train elected a leader or wagon master. If an important decision had to be made along the way, the men voted on it democratically and followed the will of the majority.

Match the letter of the paragraph with the sentence that expresses the main idea of that paragraph.

|   |      |
|---|------|
| 1. Wagon trains were governed democratically.                 | 1. D |
| 2. A pool should be surrounded by a fence.                    | 2. B |
| 3. Following short cuts caused trouble for many wagon trains. | 3. C |
| 4. Most pioneers died on their way to California.             | 4. — |
| 5. Walk, don't run, around a pool.                            | 5. A |

B. Which of the following incidents illustrate the main ideas of each of the paragraphs in Practice A.

1. Craig was excited. Today was the day for his first swimming lesson. He opened the gate and walked inside the fence which surrounded the pool. At the other end of the pool, he saw his friend Gary. With a shout Craig ran to meet him.

The lifeguard's whistle blew. "Slow down!" the guard shouted.

2. One day a little girl wandered into her neighbor's backyard. The neighbor's dog, which was usually kept chained to a post, got to his feet with a snarl. With a bark he lunged at the little girl, his chain rattling along the ground.

3. Judy loved to visit the neighbors, especially while her older sisters were at school. This particular day Judy knocked at the Parkers' front door, but there was no answer. She went around to the back of the house and saw Cuddles, the Parkers' dog, sitting by the pool.

Judy went over and patted Cuddles. Then she noticed a leaf floating on the water of the swimming pool. She leaned out over the pool, reaching for the leaf. Before

But it was too late. Craig's feet slipped on the wet pavement, and Craig sailed momentarily through the air before crashing to the cement with a loud smack.

The rest of the summer Craig sat on the sidelines with his arm in a sling, watching the swimmers splashing in the pool.

Luckily, the neighbor heard the noise and rushed outside to grab the dog before he reached the little girl. The next day workmen arrived to put up a fence around the neighbor's yard. The dog would not need to be on a chain.

she knew what was happening, she fell into the water.

Cuddles started barking loudly and rushing up and down the edge of the pool. Mr. Ames, walking down the street, heard all the noise and came to investigate.

When he saw Judy struggling in the middle of the pool, he dived in and pulled her to safety.

The next day the Parkers hired a man to put up a fence around their swimming pool.

4. On their way west, the Donner party received word of a shorter route to California discovered by Lansford Hastings. The wagon train was already behind schedule, and the promise of a cutoff that was 400 miles shorter was very tempting. They might miss some bad weather and reach their destination sooner.

5. As they followed Hastings' trail, the members of the Donner party had to cut away underbrush and fill ravines with tree stumps to build their own road. Water to drink and grass for the livestock proved to be farther apart in places than Lansford Hastings had said they would be.

Cattle, crazed with hunger and thirst, died or stampeded out on

Sometimes a writer uses a story to present an idea. Read the next story to see how this is done.

The swimming class was over, and the children were all going out to the ice cream truck for fudge bars. Gary was hot and hungry and couldn't wait to bite into that cold fudge bar.

The sign on the fence plainly read: "No running on the pavement." But Gary was eager to be

Mrs. Donner did not like the idea of getting off the established California Trail, but neither she nor any of the other women had a say in the matter.

The men in the party met together and took a vote. The decision was that they would follow the Hastings route.

the desert. Slow-moving, heavy wagons filled with valuable possessions were left behind in the frantic attempts to reach water.

The untried short cut slowed the party down so much that they were caught in the winter snows of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Only a few survived the many difficulties on the journey to California.

- 1. A 2. none
- 3. B 4. D 5. C

the first in line for the ice cream. He didn't want to have to wait in a long line. His bare feet started carrying him faster and faster, until there were pattering over the pavement at a good pace. He'd left the other children behind him and was just rounding an umbrella table and some chairs to head for

the gate when he slipped and crashed into a green chair.

Down Gary fell. The green chair toppled over on him, and they both went sliding into another chair.

By the time Gary had untangled himself, gotten to his feet, and set

the chairs back in place, the other children were lining up in front of the ice cream truck.

With a sigh Gary walked out the gate to take his place at the end of the line. He would have to wait longer than any of the others.

What is the main point which the writer is presenting in the above story?

- a. Ice cream is not good for children.
- b. You don't accomplish anything by hurrying too fast.
- c. You should watch where you are going.

If you chose *b* as the main idea of the story, you were right. The writer is teaching a lesson: Nothing is gained by hurrying too much. The moral of the story might be stated: Haste makes waste.

The writer does not state the main idea or even explain it in so many words, does he? Instead, the outcome of the story itself tells the writer's purpose.

**C.** Fables are stories that may teach a lesson or have a moral. They each get a point across to the reader without ever coming right out and telling what the main idea is. Read each of the following fables and then select the moral which they teach.

**1.** One hot summer's day Grasshopper lazily watched as Ant busily carried grain after grain of corn into his nest. At last Grasshopper said, "Why work on a day like this? Come and talk with me awhile."

"I'm much too busy for idle chatter," Ant replied. "I must get my food stored away for winter and I suggest you do the same."

"Not me," answered Grasshopper. "Why go to all that work.

I've plenty of food now, and I'll worry about winter when it comes."

"Very well," Ant said. "That's your business. As for me, I'll continue building up my winter store." And he went on with his work.

- a. It is a good idea to prepare for the future.
- b. All work and no play make life dull.
- c. Ants are smarter than grasshoppers.

1. a



2. Mistress Crow sat in a tree with a piece of cheese in her bill. Mr. Fox, walking nearby, noticed the cheese and thought to himself how good it would taste.

To the crow he said, "Good morning, Mistress Crow. My, but you're looking fine. But then, you always do. Your feathers are so sleek and black. I hear, too, that

- a. Handsome is as handsome does.
- b. Do not trust flatterers.
- c. Foxes will do anything for a piece of cheese.

2. b

When winter came, starving Grasshopper began to regret the idle, happy summer days, as he watched Ant daily satisfying his appetite with grain that he had stored away during the summer.

you have a lovely voice. What I would give to hear you sing one song."

The crow flapped her wings, settled herself proudly on the branch, and raised her head to caw her best. At the first sound, out dropped the piece of cheese. It fell to the ground, where it was quickly snapped up by Mr. Fox.

3. Sidney Hare was very proud of his fleetness and boasted that he could beat any animal in a race. No one came forward to accept the challenge. Then Alphonse Tortoise quietly said, "I will race you."

With a laugh Sidney agreed, thinking how silly Alphonse Tortoise was even to try to beat him.

The race began, and Sidney Hare darted off. He was soon out of sight. "I am so far ahead," he thought. "I'll take a little nap just to show Alphonse that I'm not taking this race at all seriously."

- a. Slow and steady wins the race.
- b. Boasting gets you nowhere.
- c. Never sleep in the middle of a race.

3. a

If you chose c as the moral of any of the stories, you let some of the details of the story confuse you. In fables the details are the background for the lesson taught, but they are not important in themselves.

In the first fable the writer could have used a cricket and a squirrel or two other animals as the characters. It is important only that one creature be foolishly lazy and the other wise in preparing for the future.

In the second fable it does not matter if the fox was after cheese or fruit or something else. The important point is that he got what he wanted through flattery.

The hare in the third fable could have stopped and danced or gone to a party instead of sleeping. The important lesson is that the person who keeps at the task at hand usually wins out in the end.

And he lay down under a tree, confident of his ability to win without even trying.

Slowly Alphonse plodded on. He passed the sleeping Sidney with barely a look in his direction. He looked straight ahead, his eyes on the finish line, and continued his steady progress.

When Sidney Hare awoke from his nap, he saw Alphonse nearing the finish line. He leaped to his feet and raced like the wind, but it was too late. Alphonse Tortoise crossed the finish line ahead of him.

LESSON **18** Stories Tell a Lot

Shaking his fist in the air, the man shouted angrily at the group of boys playing baseball on the empty lot.

"Stop all that racket or I'll call the police," he growled. "Can't you find anything better to do than batting a ball around! You're a bunch of lazy, good-for-nothing kids. If I had my way, you'd all be sent to a work farm. That way the decent folks around here would have a little peace and quiet."

What do you think of the man in the above passage? Did you form an opinion about him from the way he acted and what he said? Think of a word or two that describe him. Would you say he was generous or courageous? Would you say he was cooperative or clever? None of these words describes him, does it? He did not say or do anything that would lead you to believe he had any of these qualities.

Choose the word that best describes this character.

**a.** loyal    **b.** mean    **c.** friendly

The correct choice is obviously **b.** Everything the man said and did pointed out his meanness. The boys were merely playing baseball; yet he shouted angrily at them, waved his fist at them, threatened to call the police, and called them names.

The writer told you some things that the man said and did. Taking into account the information given to you, you made a judgment about the man. Because of his actions and speech directed toward the boys, you decided that he was a generally

disagreeable or mean man. This was exactly the conclusion the writer wished you to reach. However, rather than tell you outright that this man was mean, the writer led you to make your own general statement about the man by relating a particular incident that illustrates the man's character.

In your reading you can often make a judgment about a character by noticing how he reacts to the situations in which the writer places him. Let's see how another man reacts to the same situation of the boys' playing baseball. As you read the following selection, decide what you think about this man.

The man stuck his head out of the window and shouted to the boys playing baseball on the empty lot.

"Hey, fellows, tone it down a little, will you? I've got to get my beauty sleep. I've got a heavy date tonight —several tons worth!" He chuckled as he continued. "I'm trucking some equipment over to the new factory in Stevensport."

Which word best describes this man?

- a. mean
- b. dependable
- c. good-natured

What opinion did you form of this man? Do you know what words and incidents led you to this conclusion?

Choice c is the best answer. This man didn't appreciate the noise either, but he expressed his disapproval in a joking manner rather than in a mean way. His reaction to the situation gives you a good indication of his character without your reading the direct descriptive statement, "This is a good-natured man."

In each of the practices that follow, you will read about two incidents in the life of a person. The incidents are basically true ones, and the people were real. See how well you can judge the character of each person.

## PRACTICE

A.

I

Without a moment's hesitation, the young girl walked into the lion's cage. The man with her took her hand and placed it on the lion's face. The girl smiled as she stroked the shaggy head. She didn't flinch as the beast's huge jaws opened in a wide, lazy yawn.

II

Climbing to the top of the scaffold, the woman stood poised high above the ground. She moved to the edge and reached out to touch the marble heads. She exclaimed delightedly on the beauty of the sculpture, completely unconcerned about her precarious position.

1. What kind of a person is the woman described in the previous two passages?

- a. loving
- b. fearless
- c. hesitant

1. b

2. What particular details led you to this conclusion?

(Choose five.)

- a. A man was with her in the lion's cage.
- b. She didn't back away from the lion when he opened his mouth.
- c. She walked right into the lion's cage.
- d. She had a happy look on her face when she patted the lion.
- e. She didn't worry about being high in the air on a scaffold.
- f. She thought about the sculpture instead of falling.
- g. She liked the sculpture and commented on its beauty.

2. b, c, d, e, f

The woman is Helen Keller, a truly courageous individual. Born blind and deaf, she might have found it easy to withdraw from society and so avoid situations that were confusing or threatening. Instead, she overcame her handicaps and learned to move freely about in a world she could neither see nor hear.

**B.****I**

Lazily watching the wind fill the sails of the boats and push them along in the water, the boy fingered the kite that lay on the ground beside him. Just yesterday the wind had lifted his kite high into the air. He had felt the power of the wind tug at the kite and had gripped the kite string to hold the kite.

The boy jumped to his feet and tied the kite to himself. He splashed into the water and lay on his back. The wind caught up the kite, pulling it over the water. The boy in the water was pulled along too, and his friends shouted and pointed at the human boat towed by a kite in the wind.

**II**

One day the boy and some of his playmates went to fish at their favorite spot. The ground there was wet and spongy; it was difficult to walk on it.

Close by, the boy noticed a big pile of stones. So he directed his

friends in the making of a fine fishing wharf.

This idea resulted in a sound spanking; the stones had been left by workmen in front of the house they were building and would all have to be accounted for.

1. Which word best describes the boy presented in the above incidents?

- a. clever
- b. mischievous
- c. friendly

1. a

2. What particular details led you to this conclusion?  
(Choose four.)

- a. He thought of a new way to make himself move in the water.
- b. He noticed how the wind tugged at sails and kites, and he made use of what he noticed.
- c. He figured out a way to get over the soggy ground to the water.
- d. He showed his friends how to build a wharf.
- e. He got a spanking because he had taken the workmen's stones.

2. a, b, c, d

The clever and inventive boy described in the previous passages became one of America's outstanding inventors. When young Benjamin Franklin became a man, he used a kite again in another experiment. You know how he flew metal keys on a kite during a thunderstorm. By this experiment he showed that men could capture electricity.



C.

On his way to deliver some letters, the young postmaster noticed a friend chopping wood. The friend was working more and more slowly and was obviously getting tired.

"What are you getting for doing this work," the postmaster asked.

"A dollar," came the reply.

"What are you going to do with the dollar?"

I

"Buy me some shoes," the friend answered, wiggling his bare toes.

"I bet you'd work better if you were warm," suggested the postmaster. "Why don't you go inside for a spell and sit by the fire?"

The friend followed the suggestion. In a short time he came back out and found the pile of wood all chopped. He could just see the postmaster retreating down the road.

Martin sat down on the steps. It was good to find a cool spot on a hot day like this. His head dropped forward, his chin resting on the top button of his soldier suit and his soldier hat tipping over one eye. His mother had made the suit and hat for him from the cloth and buttons his father's regiment had brought to her.

Thinking of his father, Martin felt a lump in his throat. He wondered if he would ever again see his father, who had been captured in the war.

A voice behind him made Martin jump hastily to his feet. "Well, now, and how's the little soldier today?"

Martin drew himself to attention and saluted smartly at the word

"soldier." He turned and looked up into a smiling face.

Martin could hardly believe his eyes. There stood the President looking down at him.

"Tell me about yourself, soldier," said the President, returning Martin's salute.

Martin told the tall man all about himself. As he got to the part about his father, the lump in his throat grew and the words came out in little jerks.

As Martin fought a sob, he felt strong arms lifting him off the ground. The next thing Martin knew he was huddled in the great man's lap with his head pressed against the man's chest.

The President held the sobbing boy, patting him on the back. He



didn't say anything for a while—just sat there holding the boy in his arms. Then he began to talk quietly, asking Martin more about himself and his father and his

mother. The calm voice was soothing and comforting, and soon Martin found himself replying eagerly to the questions. The lump in his throat was gone.

1. What quality of the President is most clearly demonstrated in these two incidents?

a. intelligence    b. kindness    c. strength

1. b

2. What particular details led you to this conclusion?

(Choose seven.)

- a. He helped his friend.
- b. When he was an important man, he noticed a little boy.
- c. He was interested in the little boy's troubles.
- d. He had strong arms.
- e. He took no money for chopping the wood.
- f. He held the little boy in his lap.
- g. He comforted the little boy.
- h. He was the President.
- i. He was concerned about his friend being cold and tired.

2. a, b, c, e, f, g, i

As you may have guessed, the kind man was Abraham Lincoln, who is remembered and loved for his concern for his fellow man.

In this lesson, you have seen that you can understand the main ideas in what you are reading by understanding the little ideas. Often these little ideas, when taken together, tell you more than you would learn from a general statement.

When you read, look for the clues to general meanings in the many small details that an author gives you. You will get richer meaning from everything you read.

In the following story, you will see how the writer explains certain general statements he makes by using particular examples. He also gives you other information that leads you to make generalizations of your own.

### An Interesting Creature of the Sea

The abalone is a giant sea snail. Unlike the oyster and the clam, it has only one shell. The shell looks like a giant ear and is sometimes called a "sea ear."

The abalone lives off the coast of the western United States, Japan, and China. Its shell is horny and covered with barnacles, but the lining on the inside is beautiful. It is mother-of-pearl and has a smooth, glossy surface. It glows with many colors which become brighter or paler as you turn the shell in the light. Its glistening colors remind you of the dawn or the Northern Lights or a rainbow. So it is often called aurora or rainbow shell.

The abalone can tell the difference between light and darkness. During the day it can be found clinging to a rock. Later, after night has fallen, it crawls around the floor of the sea and eats kelp

and sea lettuce. Then it always goes back to the same spot on the rock as another day dawns.

Holding the abalone to the rock is its powerful foot. The foot, the main part of the animal, is a giant muscle. It clamps itself to the rock like a big suction cup. The foot secretes large amounts of slime, which aid its suction power. The octopus, with its many tentacles, is often unsuccessful in its attempts to pull the abalone loose.

(A) Man, however, has figured out a way to pull the abalone from its rock. Working at a depth of 20 feet, a diver feels along the rock and in its crevices until he finds an abalone. Then, using a hammer or chisel, he pries the abalone loose.

Men, as well as octopuses, enjoy eating abalone. The meat of the abalone is delicious after it is properly prepared. The muscle fiber of



the foot must be broken up by pounding. The Japanese and Chinese people like the meat dried and smoked.

For many years the beautiful shell of the abalone has been used in many ways. Some American Indians used the shells for money. They also made ornaments from the shells.

Today the people of the Channel Islands near Alaska string the shells on poles. When the wind blows, the shells jingle and flash in the sun. The noise and the bright flashes scare birds away.

(B) The abalone gives us a number of products. Buttons, buckles, knife handles, jewelry, and inlaid boxes are made from the shell. The internal organs have been used in the making of glue. The abalone often produces pearls of moderate value. They may be blue, green, or yellow.

Conservation laws protect the abalone supply. The dried meat of abalones may not be exported. A limit has been placed on the number of abalones which may be caught at any one time, and only mature abalones may be gathered.

(C) Before the enactment of the laws, men gave no thought to the possibility of abalones becoming scarce. They took the creatures from the sea with little regard for size. Many of the smaller abalones were later discarded as useless.

Tomorrow, perhaps, man may learn how to plant seeds in abalone beds just as oyster seeds are now planted to start oysters growing. This would help to assure man an abundant supply of abalones for use as food and a variety of products.

## PRACTICE

A. Answer the following questions to prove to yourself your understanding of general and particular facts.

1. What particular details does the writer tell you to show what he means when he says the inside of the shell is "beautiful"? (Choose four.)
  - a. It is horny and covered with barnacles.
  - b. It has many colors.
  - c. The colors glow as the light hits the shell.
  - d. The colors are like a rainbow.
  - e. It is smooth and glossy.
  - f. The shell looks like a giant ear and is sometimes called a "sea ear."

1. b, c, d, e
2. From the information given in Paragraph A, you could say that man is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. clever
  - b. hungry
  - c. strong

2. a
3. From the information given in Paragraph B, you could say that the abalone is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. rare
  - b. clever
  - c. useful

3. c
4. From the information given in Paragraph C, you could say that man was \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. useless
  - b. thoughtful
  - c. careless

4. c

5. Number the following events in the order in which they happen.

- The abalone meat is eaten.
- The foot of the abalone is pounded to break up the muscle fiber.
- The abalone is caught.

5. a. 3  
b. 2  
c. 1

6. Choose three examples of the ways in which abalone shells have been used.

- Indians used them for money.
- They are used to scare away birds.
- Ornaments are made from them.
- Glue is made from them.
- People make pearls from them.
- The Japanese and Chinese people like them dried and smoked.

6. a, b, c

7. What particular details are given to show what the writer means when he says that the abalone's foot is "powerful"? (Choose four.)

- It can clamp itself to a rock.
- Its suction power is increased by the slime it secretes.
- It can crush rocks and enemies.
- It is hard for an octopus to break the suction of the foot and pull the abalone from its rock.
- Man has to use a hammer or chisel to pry the abalone loose.
- During the day the abalone can be found clinging to a rock.

7. a, b, d, e

8. Number the following events in the order in which they happen.

- The abalone clings to its rock by day.
- Then it goes back to its rock.
- Later it gets its food from the floor of the sea.

8. a. 1  
b. 3  
c. 2

9. Number the following events in the order in which they happen.

- Conservation laws were enacted to protect the abalone supply. 9. a. 2
- Men gathered abalones of all sizes and then threw away the useless ones. b. 1
- Men may learn how to seed the abalone beds to increase the number of abalones. c. 3

10. In several places the writer uses the term *giant*. What do you think is meant by *giant* in this article?

- larger than a building
- larger than an average man
- larger than an ordinary snail 10. c

Below, you will have a chance to review your skill in following a sequence of events and in using the signal words that tell you what the sequence is.

Read the following math problems. Notice the signal words that help you understand the problems that involve a sequence of events happening over a period of time.

**B.** During the month of December, 28 clerks were employed by a store. The month before, there were 5 less people working in the store. After the Christmas rush was over, the store reduced the number of clerks to 20.

- During which month were the most people working in the store?  
a. November      b. December      c. January 1. b
- In which month were "5 less people" working in the store?  
a. November      b. December      c. January 2. a

3. In which month were the fewest clerks employed?  
a. November    b. December    c. January    3. c

4. How many people were working in the store in November?  
a. 28    b. 23    c. 20    4. b

5. How many people were working in the store in December?  
a. 28    b. 23    c. 20    5. a

You could understand the relation of numbers of clerks and the months because you knew the signals. The month *before* December is, of course, November. *After* December comes January.

C. In September there were 810 mature trees growing on a Christmas tree farm. The owners cut down 185 trees to sell to stores that month and at the same time planted 225 seedlings. Later that year 360 more trees were chopped down and sold on Christmas tree lots. Of the seedlings previously planted, 16 died. After the first of the new year, 400 more seedlings were planted. Because of the storms and cold weather, 43 of the trees were lost by March.

1. Which two facts were true about the Christmas tree farm in September?

- One hundred eighty-five trees were cut down to sell to stores.
- Three hundred sixty trees were cut down.
- Two hundred twenty-five new trees were planted.

2. How many trees were growing on the farm by the end of September?

- 850 trees
- 625 trees
- 1,035 trees

3. What happened to the trees on the farm during the rest of the year? (Choose two.)

- a. Sixteen new trees died.
- b. Four hundred more trees were planted.
- c. Forty-three seedlings died.
- d. Two hundred twenty-five more seedlings were planted.
- e. Three hundred sixty trees were cut down to sell.

3. a, e

4. By the beginning of January, how many trees were growing on the farm?

- a. 434 trees
- b. 474 trees
- c. 874 trees

4. b

5. What happened to the trees between January and March? (Choose two.)

- a. Four hundred more trees were planted.
- b. Forty-three of the new trees died.
- c. Four hundred trees were chopped down.
- d. Three hundred sixty trees were chopped down.

5. a, b

6. How many trees were growing on the farm in March?

- a. 831 trees
- b. 810 trees
- c. 400 trees

6. a

If you found some difficulty getting the exact number of trees, it was probably a difficulty in adding and subtracting numbers and not a mistake in understanding the sequence of events. By now you should be able to keep straight the order of events as well as the main ideas and supporting details in what you read.



1. Certain words signal the place of a sentence or paragraph in a sequence of events. Which one of the following is *not* one of these signal words?
  - a. as a result
  - b. immediately after
  - c. why
  - d. next
2. It is important to recognize these signal words because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. they help you tell fact from fiction
  - b. they introduce a new topic
  - c. they are links in a chain of ideas or events
3. Other words are used to give a general impression. Which of the following statements tells more exactly what we mean if we say "The baseball team played a great game today"?
  - a. The game was well attended.
  - b. The score was disappointing.
  - c. The team played skillfully.
  - d. The game was rained out.
4. Someone tells you the test he took was "a snap." Which of the following statements tells more exactly what he means?
  - a. The test was not very easy.
  - b. It was easy because he had studied the material thoroughly.
  - c. All he had to do was make a noise by rubbing two fingers together quickly.

5. Choose the correct word to fill the blank:

Little Mary's eyes grew wide as she caught sight of the Shetland pony. With a squeal she clasped her hands together and began dancing up and down. "Mary's \_\_\_\_\_," her brother Bob said.

- a. frightened b. happy
- c. sad d. mad

6. Just then a nearby car backfired. The pony reared up on its hind legs, its nostrils flaring, and its hooves thrashed through the air.

The word to describe the horse is \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. frightened b. happy
- c. sad d. calm

7. Which of the following is *not* one of the reasons authors frequently use little stories to tell big ideas?

- a. After the main idea, an example often gives a clearer picture of the point the author has already made.
- b. An illustration or little story can often put across a point without mention of the main idea.
- c. The author uses little stories to help make the chapter longer.

8. A fable is a \_\_\_\_\_.

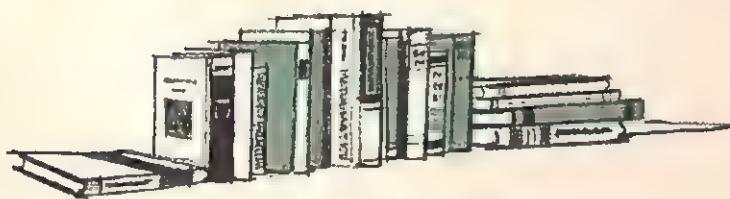
- a. place where horses are kept
- b. story with a lesson
- c. place to eat meals
- d. fur-bearing animal
- e. mark on canned foods

9. The United States Department of the Interior uses Smokey the Bear to teach Americans, young and old alike, a particular moral. Which statement expresses the moral?

- Animals in the forest can talk if they really want to.
- Only you can prevent forest fires.
- Do not feed the bears in our national parks.

10. Choose the most effective way an author has of helping you judge a person's character in a story.

- Show you how the person reacts to certain situations.
- Tell you ahead of time what to expect from this person.
- Never let you see the person in action at all, only tell about him.



Reviewing Skills

|      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. c | 6. a  |
| 2. a | 7. c  |
| 3. c | 8. b  |
| 4. b | 9. b  |
| 5. b | 10. a |



### The Making of the Hammer

Among the Norse gods, there was one who was really unfit to be a god and to live in the shining city of Asgard. He was the cause of much trouble and mischief in his frequent journeys to the earth, and he brought evil upon even the gods themselves. But as Loki was the brother of Odin, he could not very well be banished from Asgard; so the gods endured his presence as best they could. Loki did many unkind things that the gods never heard of, but once he met with just punishment for his mean-

ness. This was the time that he robbed Sif of her golden hair.

Sif was the wife of Thor, the god of thunder. She had beautiful long hair which fell over her shoulders like a shower of gold, and of this she was very proud. One day Sif fell asleep on the steps of Thor's palace; and while she lay there sleeping, Loki came walking by. There was nothing so dear to Loki as a chance to do mischief; so when he found Sif fast asleep, he stole up softly behind her and cut off all her golden hair.

From "The Making of the Hammer" by Emilie Kip Baker. Reprinted by permission of Dorothy Baker Barringer.

When Sif awoke and saw what had happened, she began to cry bitterly. Her golden hair was the pride and joy of Thor, and she was afraid that he would never want to look at her again now that it was gone. She got up from the steps where she was sitting and went away to hide in the garden.

When Thor came home, he looked for her all through the palace, and went from room to room calling her name. Not finding her in the house, he went out into the garden. After searching for a long time, he finally found poor Sif behind a stone, sobbing bitterly. When he heard her story, he tried to comfort her the best he could. But Sif continued weeping and covered her shorn head with her arms.

"I know who did this shameful thing," cried Thor, wrathfully. "It was that mischief-maker Loki, but this time he shall pay dearly for his wickedness." And he strode out of the palace with a look so threatening that even the gods might have trembled before him.

Now Loki was not expecting to be caught so soon, and he had not thought of seeking a hiding place; so when Thor came suddenly upon him, he was too frightened to try

to escape. He even forgot his ready lies; and when Thor shook him angrily and threatened to kill him for his wicked act, he made no denial, only begged for mercy and promised to restore to Sif the hair he had cut off. Thor therefore released him, after binding him by solemn oath to fulfill his promise.

The real hair which Loki had cut off he had already lost; so to keep his word to Thor he had to find something else which would resemble it closely enough to make Sif believe she had her own hair again. There was only one place where skillful and cunning work like this could be done. To reach it, Loki crossed the rainbow bridge that spans the gulf between Asgard and the earth, and hurried to the tall mountain which hides, amid its rocks, the entrance to the lower world. No one but a god, or one of the swarthy elves themselves, could have found this hidden opening, but Loki knew it well.

He first looked for a tiny stream which flowed along at the foot of the mountain. This he followed to its source in a deep cave among the rocks. When he came to the spot where it bubbled up from the ground, he raised a huge log that

was lying, apparently by chance, close beside it. This disclosed a small passage leading down into the very center of the earth; and along this path Loki hastened, often stumbling about in the darkness, until he came to the underworld where lived the swarthy elves. They were busily engaged in their wonderful workshop, which was lighted only by the fires from the forge. When they saw Loki, they laid down their tools and asked him how they could serve him.

"I have a task," answered Loki, "which requires such great skill to perform that I hardly dare ask you to attempt it. It is nothing less than for you to make of your gold some locks of hair that will be as soft and fine and beautiful as the golden hair which adorns the head of Sif, the wife of Thor. You have heard, no doubt, of its beauty, so you know how difficult a task I have given you."

The dwarfs, nothing daunted, set to work at once. Selecting a bar of perfect gold, they pounded it very soft, then spun it into threads so fine that they looked like sunbeams, and so soft that they felt like silk. When the work was finished and placed in Loki's

hand, it exceeded in beauty anything he had ever seen. He felt sure that Thor could not complain of his gift.

He thanked the swarthy elves and hastened with his prize back to Asgard. He went at once to the palace of Thor, where all the gods had assembled to see the fulfillment of Loki's promise.

In spite of the success of his undertaking, the fear of Thor's hasty temper kept Loki somewhat humbled; for the Thunderer had been known to crush the object of his anger with his hammer when once his wrath was fully roused. His face was now dark and threatening as Loki approached. Beside him stood Sif, still weeping bitterly and trying to cover her head with her hands. But Loki came up boldly and placed upon her head the golden hair which the elves had made. To the astonishment of all, it immediately grew fast, and no one could have told that it was not her own golden hair. So Sif was proud and happy once again, and Loki was forgiven.

Now when Loki was in the underground home of the dwarfs, he thought that it would be well to get two other gifts—one for Odin

and one for Freya, the goddess of beauty. He thought in that way their anger would fall less heavily on him for his cruelty to Thor's beautiful wife. The dwarfs were always glad to help Loki when he was in trouble, for they, too, delighted in mischief-making; so when he had asked them for the two other gifts, they gladly set to work. They got together a hundred different materials; for things of earth, air, fire, and water went into the making of the wonderful gifts that came from the hands of the dwarfs. They had made and given to Loki a spear that would always hit the mark no matter how badly it was thrown and a marvelous boat that would fold up into a tiny package, but could also expand large enough to hold all the gods and goddesses in Asgard. Loki was delighted with these gifts and took them with him back to Asgard.

Though the hair of spun gold proved to be so perfect that Loki had nothing to fear from Thor's anger, he saw that Odin was still displeased and was looking at him with stern brows. So the wily god produced his two other gifts, and handed the spear to Odin and the boat to Freya. Both Odin and

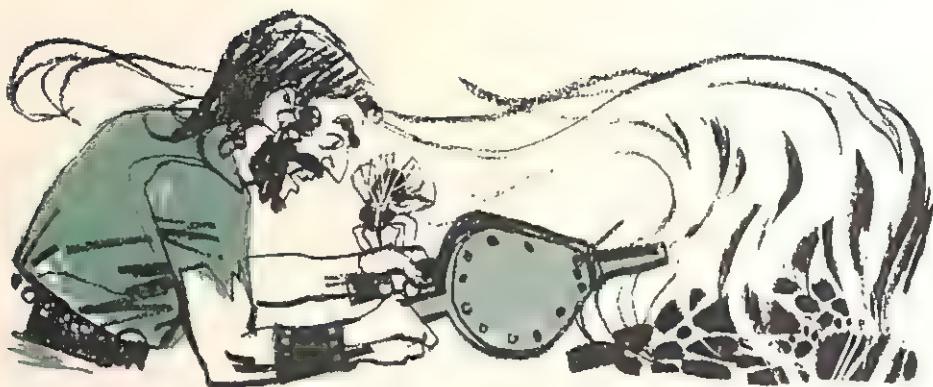
Freya were delighted with the clever workmanship of the elves. All the company were so busy examining Loki's gifts that they did not notice the dwarf Brock, who had followed Loki to Asgard and entered the palace.

When all the gods grew loud in their approval of the magic spear and boat, Brock could contain his anger no longer. "Can you find nothing better than those petty toys to praise?" he cried. "My brother Sindri can make far more wonderful things than these."

At this boastful interference Loki grew very angry.

"Prove it, then," he said. "I know that your brother is only a stupid workman. Let us make a wager that you cannot bring here three gifts better than those you scorn; and whichever of us loses in the contest shall pay for it with his head." Brock accepted the challenge and set off at once to the cave where Sindri kept his dwarfs at work night and day.

He told his brother of the wager he had made with Loki, and Sindri laughed. Then he made ready a huge fire; and as he worked busily over his tools, he bade Brock keep the bellows going as hard as he



could so that the flames would leap higher and higher. Then, when he thought the right moment had come, he threw into the fire a pigskin; and bidding Brock keep steadily at work on the bellows, he left the cave.

The dwarf blew hard at the fire; and the forge gleamed so brightly that the whole cave was lit up, and Brock could see the piles of gold and silver and glittering gems that lay all around. Then suddenly an enormous gadfly flew into the room and, lighting on his hand, stung him so badly that he roared with pain. Still Brock did not take his hand from the bellows, for, with the cunning of his race, he knew that the gadfly was none other than Loki, who had taken this form hoping to spoil Sindri's work.

When the master smith Sindri returned, he looked eagerly at the

forge and saw that the fire glowed as brightly as ever. So he muttered a few magic words over the flames and drew forth a golden boar. This he handed to his brother, saying that the boar had the power to fly through the air and shed light from his golden bristles as he flew. Brock was so much pleased with this gift that he said nothing about his swollen hand; and when Sindri asked him to keep his place at the bellows, he willingly agreed.

The smith then threw a lump of gold into the flames; and bidding Brock keep the fire at white heat, he again left the cave. Brock began to work harder than ever at the bellows; and as the fire glowed so that it seemed like daylight in the room, the gadfly flew at him again and stung him on the neck. He screamed with pain and tried to shake off his tormentor, but still he kept faithfully at his

work and never lifted his hand a moment from the bellows. When Sindri returned, he found the fire glowing brightly. Leaning over it, he pulled out of the flames a fine gold ring, which every ninth night would drop nine gold rings as wonderful as itself.

Brock was so delighted with this gift that he almost forgot about his wounded neck. Then Sindri threw a lump of iron into the fire. Before he left the cave, he bade his brother to work steadily at the bellows, for this was the most important gift of all. Brock grasped the bellows firmly, and began to work with all his might. Just as the flames were leaping fiercely and the room seemed lit by a million candles, the gadfly flew at Brock again and stung him between the eyes.

The dwarf was almost frantic from the pain of the wound. But though dazed and blinded so that he could hardly see the fire, he kept doggedly at work on the bellows, only lifting one hand for a moment to wipe the blood from his eyes. The fire had been glowing like a furnace, but in that one instant the flames burned less brightly; and Sindri—who had just entered

the room—began to berate his brother for his carelessness. Then the smith drew out of the fire a mighty hammer, perfect in every way except that the handle was too short, owing to Brock's having lifted his hand a moment from the bellows.

Sindri gave the three gifts to his brother and bade him hasten to Asgard and bring back the head of Loki as payment for the lost wager. When the dwarf reached Odin's council hall, the gods had assembled to decide the contest, for everyone was eager to see what gifts Sindri had sent.

Brock handed the ring to Odin, who praised it highly and said, "Now, I shall never want for gold." Freya was delighted with his gift of the golden boar and said that it would be much more entertaining to ride on its back than in Loki's magic boat. Lastly Brock gave the strong, wonderful hammer to Thor, saying, "Here is a hammer which can crush mountains, can cause lightning and thunder when it swings through the air, and will always come back to your hand no matter how far you may throw it."

Then the dwarf turned to Odin and said, "Decide now between

Loki and me, O Wise One, and declare whose gifts are worth most to Asgard."

Though the gods were reluctant to condemn one of their number in favor of a dwarf, there was no disputing the fact that Thor's hammer was worth more than all of Loki's gifts, for it meant a sure protection to Asgard from the attacks of the frost giants. So Odin declared that Brock had won, and that Loki must pay the forfeit with his head.

Now Loki had no intention of submitting to this decree, so he first offered the dwarf a huge sum of money as a ransom; but Brock angrily refused the gold and insisted that the bargain should be kept. Then Loki cried out, "Well, you must catch me first." Away he sped on his magic shoes, which could carry him through the air and over the water.

Brock knew he could never catch the fugitive; so he grew black with rage and turned upon Odin, crying, "Is this the way that the

gods keep faith, or shall the word of Odin stand fast?"

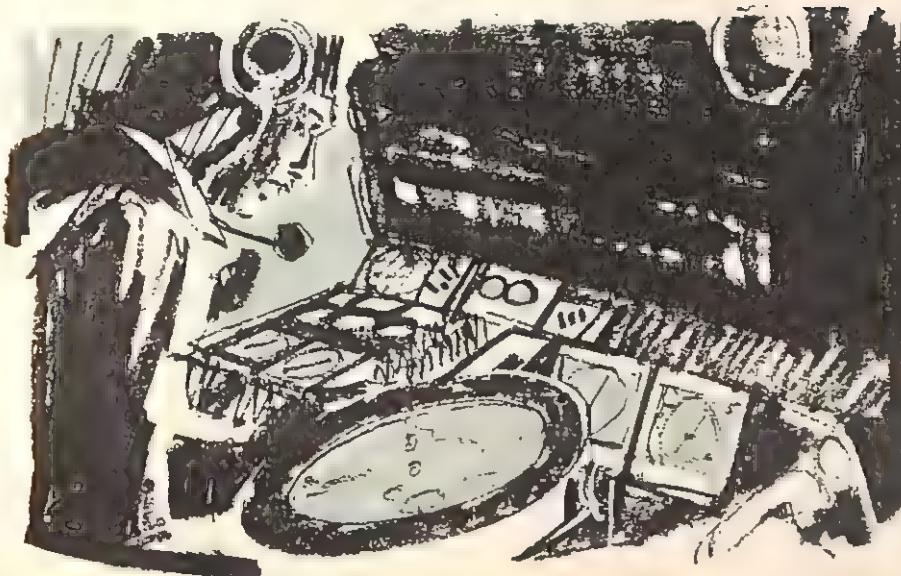
Now all the company knew well that a promise made by even the lowest among the gods must be held sacred; so Odin sent Thor after Loki. In his swift chariot, drawn by the snow-white goats, the Thunderer easily overtook the runaway and brought him back to Asgard. Then Loki saw that he must save his life by cunning, and he said to Brock, "You may take my head if you wish, but you must not touch my neck."

Now the dwarf knew that he was outwitted by the crafty Loki; so he went away fuming with rage and disappointment. But before he left Asgard, he took out of his pocket an awl and a thong, and sewed Loki's lips together; so that for a while, at least, the tricky god could not do any more boasting.

Thus it was that Thor came into possession of the magic hammer called Miölnir—the mighty weapon that the enemies of the Aesir were to fear for ages to come.

1. What was Loki's original purpose for going to the underworld?
2. What did Loki do when Odin declared that Brock had won the wager?
3. Why was Brock's gift of the hammer important?

1. To get something to replace Sif's hair.
2. Loki ran away.
3. Enemies of the gods feared it.



Here are two passages with the same main idea. However, they are written in different ways. Read them and see if you can tell how they are different.

(A) On a sonar screen a school of fish looks like moving blips, or marks. An operator watching the screen can tell not only the location of the fish in the water below but sometimes also the kind of fish they are.

(B) The alert sonar operator watched his screen. As he watched, moving blips, or marks, appeared on the screen.

“Fish below,” he sang out. Then he studied the pattern of moving blips and added, “It looks like a school of tuna.”

1. In which passage (or passages) is the main idea that fish can be located by using sonar?
  - a. Passage A
  - b. Passage B
  - c. both A and B

1. c
2. In which passage (or passages) did something happen?
  - a. Passage A
  - b. Passage B
  - c. both A and B

2. b
3. Which passage (or passages) tells you of events happening over a period of time?
  - a. Passage A
  - b. Passage B
  - c. both A and B

3. b
4. Which passage (or passages) is an explanation of the main idea?
  - a. Passage A
  - b. Passage B
  - c. both A and B

4. a

Do you see now the difference between the two passages? Passage A is an explanation of the main idea. It exposes the facts about the topic. It is called *expository* writing.

Passage B is a sequence of events in which a character takes part. It tells a little story. It narrates some events. It is therefore called *narrative* writing.

The base word of expository is *expose*. In expository writing the writer exposes, or uncovers, his subject so the reader will understand it better. The base word of narrative is *narrate*. In narrative writing the writer narrates, or tells, something that happened. He tells some kind of story, with events and characters. The fables you read in Lesson 17 are narratives. Can you think of other narratives?

## PRACTICE

A. The following story is an account of certain events in the life of one of America's great athletes. As you read, think about what type of writing each paragraph illustrates.

(A) Glenn Cunningham raced back inside the burning schoolhouse. Then he heard his brother Floyd scream. He answered him with a shout. Thick smoke filled the room, making it impossible for Glenn to see anything. Glenn coughed and choked as he breathed the stifling smoke. Then he lost consciousness.

(B) When Glenn regained consciousness hours later, he was lying in bed. His legs were covered with bandages. They ached and burned

unbearably. Beside his bed sat his mother and father, looking tired and anxious. The doctor was bending over the bed.

(C) Strong legs and good wind are needed to be a champion runner. Even more important, an athlete has to have determination and the will to win. He must be willing to accept his coach's advice and learn from the experience of others. And, in spite of the seemingly hopeless odds which he might face, he must keep trying to do his best.



(D) The doctor told Glenn that he would never walk again. He recommended that Glenn's legs be amputated, but Glenn would not hear of it. He made up his mind that he would walk again. He prayed and prayed as the weeks passed and there was still no change in his condition. His father and

mother helped him all they could. They massaged his legs. They encouraged him to be brave. They joined in his prayers. Finally the day came when Glenn could stand on his own two feet. In a few more days he could walk. Later he ran every chance he got and went on to become America's champion miler.

1. Does Paragraph A tell about events that happened?

a. yes      b. no

1. a

2. Number the following happenings in proper order.

a. Glenn choked on the smoke.  
b. Glenn ran into the schoolhouse.  
c. Glenn heard Floyd scream.  
d. Glenn lost consciousness.

2. a. 3  
b. 1  
c. 2  
d. 4

3. Did the above happenings all take place at exactly the same time?

a. yes      b. no

3. b

4. What information is given in Paragraph B?  
(Choose five.)

a. Glenn's legs were covered with bandages.  
b. Glenn was lying in bed.  
c. His mother and father were sitting by the bed.  
d. The doctor was there.  
e. Glenn's legs hurt.  
f. The doctor came into the room.  
g. Glenn sat up in bed.

4. a, b, c, d, e

5. Were the facts that are answers to Question 4 taking place at exactly the same time?  
a. yes      b. no      5. a

6. What main idea does Paragraph B explain?  
a. What Glenn saw and felt when he regained consciousness  
b. What Glenn did when he regained consciousness  
c. What Glenn's parents did after Glenn regained consciousness      6. a

7. Did anything happen in Paragraph C?  
a. yes      b. no      7. b

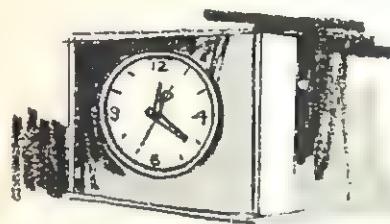
8. What main idea does Paragraph C explain?  
a. How to run a good race  
b. What makes a champion athlete  
c. What happened to a racer      8. b

9. Is there a passage of time in Paragraph C?  
a. yes      b. no      9. b

10. Number in their correct order the happenings narrated in Paragraph D.  
a. Glenn became a champion runner.  
b. Glenn refused to allow the doctor to amputate his legs.  
c. Glenn stood up.  
d. The doctor told Glenn that he would never walk again.  
e. Glenn ran everywhere he could.  
f. Glenn and his family prayed and massaged his legs.  
g. Glenn walked.  
h. Glenn became America's champion miler.      10. a. 7  
b. 2  
c. 4  
d. 1  
e. 6  
f. 3  
g. 5  
h. 8

Did you realize that Paragraphs A and D are examples of narrative writing? They each tell a series of happenings that took place over a period of time. Paragraphs B and C are examples of expository writing. They both explain main ideas, and the facts which they present do not take place in any time sequence. All the ideas in each paragraph are explained as facts.

B. Read the following article about measuring time. It is expository writing and presents some main ideas along with specific facts that explain the main ideas. Look for the main ideas and the supporting information as you read.



## Time

Time is measured in many ways. Man has used the sun, the moon, and the planets to help him tell time. The movement of the stars has been used to compute time.

Ancient Egyptians used what is called a "gnomon" to tell time. They thrust a rod, branch, pillar, or stake into the ground. As the sun passed overhead, the gnomon cast a shadow on the ground. The Egyptians measured the length of the shadow to find out what time it was. About 1500 B.C., the sundial,

which worked in the same way, was invented.

The Egyptians wanted to be able to tell time inside as well as outside. They invented "clocks" to use indoors. In A.D. 1200, Egyptians told time by using a burning candle. As time passed, the candle got shorter and shorter. Another method of measuring time was dripping water. Still another was trickling sand. The amount of water or sand caught in a container indicated the length of time that had passed.

Mechanical clocks and watches have regulators that divide time into small, equal parts. The regulator can be a spring, a balance,

or a pendulum that swings back and forth. A balance regulator makes a cuckoo clock work. A watch has a spring regulator.

1. Which main ideas are presented in the article?

(Choose four.)

- a. Man has used heavenly bodies to help him compute time.
- b. The movement of the stars has been used to measure time.
- c. A gnomon, used by the ancient Egyptians, was one way of telling time.
- d. The candle got shorter and shorter.
- e. The Egyptians invented "clocks" to use indoors.
- f. Mechanical clocks and watches have regulators which divide time into small, equal parts.

1. a, c, e, f

2. What particular facts tell more about the gnomon?

(Choose three.)

- a. It was a kind of stick that had been thrust into the ground.
- b. It was called a sundial too.
- c. The pole made a shadow.
- d. The length of the shadow cast by the gnomon indicated what time it was.

2. a, c, d

3. What were some of the indoor "clocks" used by the Egyptians? (Choose three.)

- a. sundial
- b. gnomon
- c. melting candle
- d. dripping water
- e. trickling sand

3. c, d, e

4. Choose two *types* of regulators that are in use.

- a. springs
- b. sand
- c. pendulums

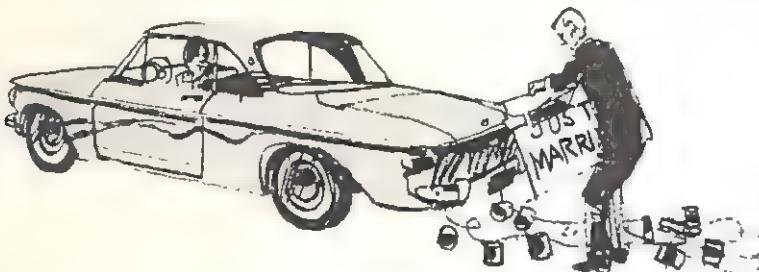
4. a, c

5. What type of regulator does a watch have?

- a. spring
- b. balance
- c. pendulum

5. a

C. The following narrative relates what happened over a short period of time. After you finish reading, you should be able to remember the correct order of events.



### The Newlyweds

Phil pulled the car over to the curb and got out. His bride of several hours stayed in the front seat. He walked to the back of the car and removed the large "Just Married" sign. After he had untied the tin cans and old shoes, he threw them behind the suitcases in the luggage compartment.

Walking all around the car, he inspected it for any other telltale marks that might show he and Margie were newlyweds. Finding none, he climbed back in the car and started the engine.

"That's that," he smiled at Margie. "Now no one will ever know that we were just married. We won't have to put up with any old jokes or teasing remarks."

"Good!" Margie said, returning the smile. Several miles farther

along, Phil pulled the car off the road into a service station.

"We'll fill up the tank now and we won't have to stop again until we get to the mountains. Now act casual. No one will suspect."

Phil rolled down the window and called to the attendant, "Fill it up with regular, please."

In a minute they could hear the gasoline being pumped into the tank. The attendant walked to the front of the car and began to wash the windshield. Leaning down to peer in the open window, he grinned broadly and said, "Congratulations, you two lovebirds. Ain't love grand?" He winked his eye at them. Then he walked back to finish filling the gas tank.

Phil and Margie looked at each other in surprise.

"How did he know?" Margie asked.

"Maybe it's true people can recognize newlyweds, but I thought we were being very casual," Phil puzzled. "Oh, well, why hide it!" he added with a laugh.

When the service station attendant came back for the money, Phil asked him, "Just how did you know we were newlyweds anyway?"

Number the following things that happened in the story in their correct order.

|  |      |
|--|------|
| 1. The couple stopped to get gas.  | 1. 3 |
| 2. The service station attendant began pumping gas into the tank.          | 2. 5 |
| 3. Margie and Phil saw the note, on the gas tank cap.                      | 3. 8 |
| 4. Phil stopped the car to take off all of the "Just Married" decorations. | 4. 1 |
| 5. Phil and Margie tried to look and act casual.                           | 5. 4 |
| 6. The service station attendant congratulated the couple.                 | 6. 6 |
| 7. The attendant came back with the cap to the gas tank.                   | 7. 7 |
| 8. Phil was sure that no one would know that he and Margie were newlyweds. | 8. 2 |

By now you can see the difference between expository writing that explains facts or ideas and narrative writing that tells you a story. Narrative material tells you of characters and of events that happen over a period of time.

Go on to the next lesson to see how different kinds of writing can appear together.

"Wait a minute," the man grinned, "and I'll show you."

He walked to the back of the car again; and when he returned, he was carrying the cap to the gas tank. He held it up for Margie and Phil to see. They leaned over to look at the tank cap.

On the cap a neatly typed note was taped. It stated, "Congratulate us—we're newlyweds!"

With the dogs close on his heels, the deer raced in among the trees. The woods were cool and dark. The sunlight that filtered through the leaves of the dense trees made only scattered splotches of hazy light. Pine needles and dead leaves carpeted the ground below the tall trees.

The gray deer darted frantically through the woods. Her fleet hooves barely touched the carpeting of needles and leaves as she sought a place to hide. Across a small stream she saw a tangle of undergrowth. With a leap she landed in the middle of the thicket, and froze—silent but with a pounding heart.

Is the selection you just read narrative or descriptive? Does it tell a story or describe something? If you said narrative, you are right, because it does relate a series of actions or happenings. If you said descriptive, you are partly right, too. In the midst of the narrative there is a description of the woods that the deer entered.



Does the action continue during the description? Of course, the deer does not really stop her flight while someone describes the woods, but a writer may add details to his story so that the reader can see more clearly where things are happening and who is in the scene. As you read the descriptive part, you do not sense that time or action is moving on. In fact, the writer has stopped time and suspended the action for a while, just as a projectionist might stop a movie and show the actors frozen in the middle of an action.

There was no time lapse between the moment the deer raced in among the trees and when she darted frantically through the woods. The writer chose to divide these two happenings in the narrative, but that does not mean that the two actions happened even seconds apart.

Why does the writer interrupt the narrative and the time sequence? He wants you to be able to *see* where the deer was going. He suspends the time and action so that he can draw a word picture of the surroundings, or the setting. When a movie is stopped, you can notice many details in the still picture which you would otherwise overlook while the action is taking place. The writer wants his reader to have the same opportunity. He wants you to be more aware of a story's setting or of the characters themselves, and so he shows them to you in descriptive passages within the narrative.

## PRACTICE

You are about to read a selection from Washington Irving's famous story "Rip Van Winkle." Rip has been for a walk in the woods to escape his wife's nagging and is just starting to return to his home. The sequence of events that follow are interrupted now and then by descriptions of the setting and the characters. Notice how these descriptive passages help you understand and see the action taking place.

## Rip Van Winkle

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from the distance hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked around, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his senses must have deceived him and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" At the same time Wolf bristled up his back and, giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely place, but, supposing it to be someone of the neighborhood in need of assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach, he was still more surprised at the oddness of the stranger's appearance. He was a

short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion—a cloth jacket strapped round the waist, several pairs of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulders a stout keg that seemed full of liquor and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual readiness, and, mutually relieving each other, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long, rolling peals like distant thunder that seemed to issue out of the deep ravine toward which their rugged path led. He paused for an instant, but, supposing it to be the muttering of one of those passing thundershowers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheater,

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surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which trees shot their branches so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time, Rip and his companion had labored on without a word; for, though Rip marveled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheater, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the center was a company of odd-looking personages playing at ninepins. They were dressed in a quaint, outlandish fashion; some wore short jackets with long knives in their

belts, and most of them had enormous breeches similar in style to that of the guide's. Their looks, too, were peculiar. One had a large head, broad face, and small, piggish eyes; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little, red cock's tail. They all had beards of various shapes and colors. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced jacket and broad belt, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Dutch painting in the parlor of the village parson, which had been brought over from Holland.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was that, though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly stopped their play and stared at Rip with such a fixed, statuelike gaze and such strange countenances that his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large drinking mugs and made signs to him to wait upon the company. They swallowed the liquor in profound silence and then returned to their game.

A. Answer the following questions about the sequence of the actions in the story. See how well you understood the story about Rip Van Winkle.

1. When did Wolf growl and act strangely?
  - a. when he entered the amphitheater
  - b. after Rip heard his name called the first time
  - c. when Rip heard his name called the second time
2. What happened after Rip went down the hill to help the man?
  - a. The man picked up a heavy barrel.
  - b. The man put on a short coat.
  - c. The man motioned for Rip to help him carry the barrel.
3. What caused Rip to pause as he went back up the hill?
  - a. The barrel was heavy.
  - b. He heard a noise like thunder.
  - c. The man told him to stop.

1. c

2. c

3. b

4. What happened after Rip and the little man entered the amphitheater?

- The men inside the amphitheater stopped playing ninepins and stared at Rip.
- The men became quiet and said nothing.
- The men inside the amphitheater began playing ninepins.

4. a

5. What did Rip do after his companion had emptied the contents of the keg into drinking mugs?

- He drank from one of the mugs.
- He served the little men.
- He joined in the game of ninepins.

5. b

B. Now see how well you understood the descriptive parts and if you could really see the setting and the characters.

1. How did Rip's companion look? (Choose six.)

- He was short and stout.
- He carried a heavy barrel on his shoulders.
- He had thick bushy hair.
- He had a moustache.
- He was dressed like an old-fashioned Dutchman.
- He wore a jacket and breeches.
- He had a beard.

1. a, b, c, e, f, g

2. Which of the following describe the amphitheater? (Choose three.)

- All around it were steep cliffs.
- A bright, cloudless blue sky covered the amphitheater.
- Branches of trees stuck out over the edges of the cliffs.
- Trees covered the bottom of the amphitheater.
- The branches of trees shut out most of the sky.

2. a, c, e

3. *What was true of the group of men in the amphitheater? (Choose six.)*

- a. They were playing ninepins.
- b. They laughed and joked as they played.
- c. They were handsome little men.
- d. They were dressed in a strange, old-fashioned manner.
- e. They were quiet and serious as they played.
- f. One had little eyes set in a huge head.
- g. One had a giant nose which covered almost his whole face.
- h. Most wore very large pants.

4. *How did the leader of the group look? (Choose six.)*

- a. He was old.
- b. The high-heeled shoes he wore had roses in them.
- c. His hat had a feather in it.
- d. He looked like a village parson.
- e. He was heavy.
- f. His face was rough from exposure to the weather.
- g. He wore red stockings, a tight jacket, and a wide belt.
- h. He had an enormous nose.

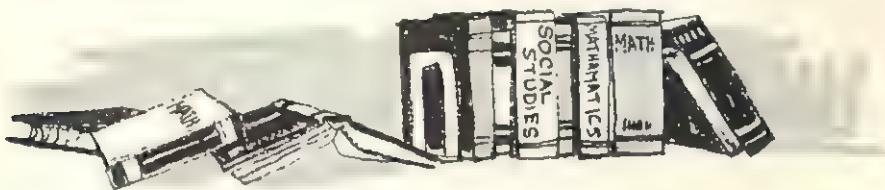
3. a, d, e, f, g, h

4. a, b, c, e, f, g

As you read the passage from "Rip Van Winkle" and then answered the questions, you could tell which parts told a story and which parts described the surroundings and the characters. The author's use of description during his story helps you, the reader, appreciate the setting and the characters. Descriptions make your reading more colorful and enjoyable. They also help you remember more clearly what you read.

Every day in your schoolwork you read expository and narrative passages. You probably never thought about the style of writing in your textbooks. Yet even your mathematics and social studies books are written with care and with a purpose. Good writing makes use of description, narration, and explanation to make clear what the writer is trying to say.

Your ability to understand what you read influences greatly your success in school. Let's look at some expository, narrative, and descriptive passages similar to those you read in mathematics and social studies.



### PRACTICE

A. Here is an explanation of a process in mathematics. Read it carefully so that you will know what the main idea is and will understand the details that explain the main idea.

Many salesmen are paid on the basis of how much they sell. They may not get a regular salary but instead receive a percentage of the amount of their sales. This percentage is called a *commission*.

If a salesman receives a commission of 12 per cent, this means he would be paid 12 per cent of the

total amount of his sales. If he sold \$100 worth of goods, he would receive \$12 as his pay.

To find the amount of money that a salesman makes, multiply the total amount of his sales by the percentage of his commission. Convert the percentage to a decimal figure before you multiply.

1. The main idea of the above passage is \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. how to make money and keep a good job
- b. what commissions are and how they are figured
- c. how salesmen are paid and what their salaries are

1. b

2. A commission is \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. a certain percentage of the total sales which is paid to a salesman
- b. 12% of everything a salesman sells
- c. the salary a salesman receives which is the same amount of money each month or week

2. a

3. Before you can figure the amount of money a salesman working on a commission basis should receive, you need to know \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. (Choose two.)

- a. the amount he was paid the month before
- b. the percentage of his commission
- c. the total amount of his sales

3. b, c

4. To find the amount to be paid to a salesman, you \_\_\_\_\_ the total amount of his sales by the percentage of his commission.

- a. multiply
- b. divide
- c. add

4. a

5. You must remember to change the percentage to \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. a whole number
- b. a fraction
- c. a decimal figure

5. c

Did you have any trouble answering the questions? If you did, you may not have paid enough attention to the meaning of the words and to the details that explained the main idea. You have to understand the main idea of the explanation.

B. Now that you understand the explanation, *you are* ready to try a problem concerning commissions. The problem is written in a narrative manner; that is, it involves a sequence of events and a passage of time. Be sure that *you keep the* facts in the correct order as you work along.

Mr. Cameron worked in a large clothing store. During the months of January, February, and March, he sold \$16,832 worth of clothing and received a commission of 14%.

At the end of March, his commission was raised to 15%. During the next three-month period, he sold \$15,657 worth of goods in the clothing store.

1. What was Mr. Cameron's commission percentage when he sold \$16,832 worth of goods? 1. 14%
2. The percentage of his commission changed at the end of what month? 2. March
3. What percentage was his commission in April? 3. 15%
4. During which months did Mr. Cameron sell \$15,657 worth of goods? 4. April, May, June
5. Write the problem (a numerical equation) you would use to figure out how much Mr. Cameron received the first three months of the year. 5.  $\$16,832 \times .14 =$
6. Write the problem (a numerical equation) you would use to figure out how much Mr. Cameron earned during April, May, and June. 6.  $\$15,657 \times .15 =$

C. Read the following article about clipper ships. You might find such an article in your social studies book. At first glance it looks like the narration of an historical event. As you read, however, see if the writer has inserted any expository passages. If he has done this, try to understand why he interrupted the narrative to do so.

## The Flying Cloud

(A) The bowsprit cut cleanly through the waves. The rushing wind stretched the sails tight in large billows as the *Flying Cloud*, a gold and white, pencil-slim clipper ship, headed out of the New York harbor. Loaded with freight and gold-hungry passengers, she raced southward to the tip of South America, rounded Cape Horn in a wide arc, and sailed north to San Francisco in a record 89 days and 8 hours.

(B) It was 1854, and the famous *Flying Cloud* was the fastest and most beautiful clipper ship in the world. She was long for this time, 235 feet, but was only 41 feet wide. Her three masts were very tall with the mainmast soaring 88 feet into the air. Her mainyard spread 80 feet across the ship and water. The graceful *Flying Cloud* had 30 sails with a total of about 40,000 square feet of canvas.



(C) Captain Cressy commanded the *Flying Cloud's* crew of 60 men. Before they set sail, Cressy began to train his men well. They learned to scurry in the rigging and set sail in all kinds of weather with only swaying ropes and toe holds to use for balance. More than once during the voyage these men hung over the water to work the sails in freezing gales.

(D) To San Francisco the ship brought machinery, furniture, dried

foods, tools, and salt. She dropped this cargo and her passengers and then sailed on to China. The tea, spices, and fine silks which she traded with the Chinese, she took back to New York.

(E) In the years that followed, other clipper ships tried to beat the *Flying Cloud's* record time. For ten years the clipper ships reigned; then steam made sails unnecessary. The beautiful clipper ships gradually disappeared.

1. Number the following events in their proper order.

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| a. The <i>Flying Cloud</i> left New York.   | 1. a. 2 |
| b. Captain Cressy began training his crew.  | b. 1    |
| c. The ship went to China.  | c. 5    |
| d. Steam replaced sails as a ship's means of locomotion.  | d. 8    |
| e. The <i>Flying Cloud</i> rounded Cape Horn.   | e. 3    |
| f. The <i>Flying Cloud</i> arrived in San Francisco, setting a record time for the trip from New York to San Francisco. | f. 4    |
| g. Other ships tried to beat the <i>Flying Cloud's</i> record time.   | g. 7    |
| h. The ship returned to New York.   | h. 6    |

2. Which paragraph in the article does *not* tell about any of the happenings in the above sequence of events?

- a. Paragraph A
- b. Paragraph B
- c. Paragraph C

2. b

3. What does the expository paragraph tell about?

- It explains details related to the record-setting voyage.
- It describes details of the ship.
- It tells how clipper ships looked at that time.

3. b

4. For what reason is the *Flying Cloud* recorded in history?

- It was 235 feet long but only 41 feet wide.
- It sailed from San Francisco to China in record time in 1854.
- It sailed from New York to San Francisco in record time in 1854.

4. c

5. How does Paragraph B add to the narrative?

- It helps you visualize the historic ship.
- Its purpose is to give you enough information about the ship so that you can build one like it.
- It is part of the record of the voyage.

5. a

You know how important it is for you to read carefully the mathematics problems and the social studies material you have in school. Your reading will be easier if you watch for the particular passages that tell you things in different ways.

Look for the passages that tell a story. These are the narrative sections. Look for the parts that describe people and places. These are the descriptive sections. Look for the parts that explain facts and ideas. These are the expository passages. Each type of writing contributes to your understanding of what you read.

Now do you see that your textbooks, too, are written with purpose and style? If you know how to read and understand sentences and paragraphs in articles and stories, you will be able to read and understand the mathematics problems and social studies material that you have in school.

Sometimes events in a narrative are not found in the order of their happening. Usually the writer lets you know this.

In the biographical sketch of Nathaniel Bowditch that you will read next, some of the events in his lifetime are not presented in chronological order. Sometimes a signal word will alert you to incidents that are not in sequence; other times you must use logic and good sense to recognize a jump backward in time.

### PRACTICE

A. Read the article below, keeping in mind the order in which the events of Bowditch's life happened.

#### Nathaniel Bowditch

*The American Navigator*, written by Nathaniel Bowditch and published in 1802, became the basic book for ocean navigation. By using Bowditch's book and methods, sailors were able to arrive at port without sailing long, extra miles. Even in bad weather, sailors could now stay on course.

Before publishing his book, Bowditch spent many years working on his figures and charts to make them accurate and easy to use. He proved his new system by bringing a ship into port in record time during a bad snowstorm. His calculations

were so accurate that he sailed across the ocean and directly into the dock at Salem, Massachusetts.

Nathaniel Bowditch was born in Salem in 1773. He spent most of his life in Salem. Nat made several long voyages. He commanded his own ship in 1802 and taught the crew his new method of navigation.

Even as a boy, Bowditch was interested in arithmetic. He liked working with figures. He believed that numbers were the key to all science. Later, on his voyages, he dreamed of finding an easy way for sailors to navigate accurately. He



made table after table and wrote chart after chart so that sailors would not have to do difficult figuring.

Bowditch made an index for all of his charts and tables. He wrote out instructions for using instruments like the lunar and sextant. These became part of *The American Navigator*. A sailor could take readings with his instruments and then use Bowditch's index to find the

right chart and table. He could easily and rapidly tell where he was, even in strange waters. He could plan and follow the shortest route from one port to another.

Nathaniel Bowditch succeeded in reducing complicated figuring to a simple method that was easy to understand. There was, with his new book and method, no more learning involved than the proper use of instruments and an index.

Still, the sailing world was slow to accept the new system. It took some time before Bowditch's method completely replaced sailing by guesswork and the use of poor charts.

Nat's strong character, his belief, and his thorough understanding of

numbers were necessary to prove, and have the world finally accept, the new system of navigation which made it possible to sail with accuracy by the shortest line from one place to another. *The American Navigator* is still the basic book used by ships' navigators.

Check yourself on how well you understood the sequence of the happenings in Nathaniel Bowditch's life. Number the following sentences in their correct sequence.

1. Nathaniel Bowditch's book, *The American Navigator*, was published. 1. 8
2. Bowditch's book helped sailors keep on course. 2. 9
3. Bowditch spent many years working on the figures and charts which he included in his book. 3. 5
4. To prove the accuracy of his new system, he sailed a ship across the ocean and directly into a chosen port. 4. 7
5. Nat was born in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1773. 5. 1
6. Nat made several long voyages. 6. 3
7. Nat was interested in arithmetic. 7. 2
8. He dreamed of finding an easy, accurate method of navigation. 8. 4
9. Bowditch made an index for his charts and tables. 9. 6
10. The method of navigating presented in *The American Navigator* slowly replaced old methods of navigation. 10. 10
11. Navigators today still use Bowditch's book. 11. 11

B. In the story that follows, the sequence of the narration is interrupted only once. There is an interruption for a scene that took place earlier than the time of the start of the story but which the writer wants you, the reader, to know about. This interruption is called a *flashback*. See if you can recognize the flashback when it comes. Then notice when the narration continues again. The writer picks the story up right where he left off before the jump back in time.

## The Old and the Young

Leslie slumped in the corner of the front seat of the car. Every now and then she peered out the window, hoping desperately that none of her friends would be on the street to catch a glimpse of her as she passed.

Grandpa half turned his head and spoke to Leslie. "What street did you say this house is on?"

Leslie sat up with a start. "I told you, Grandpa. You don't need to take me all the way there. Just drop me off on the corner of Creek and Butler."

"Nonsense!" snorted Grandpa. "I wouldn't dream of leaving a pretty young lady standing on a corner. Now, where's the mansion located?"

"It's on Farrell Street—834," Leslie mumbled.

"Whew," Grandpa whistled, putting his foot on the brake pedal as he approached a stop light. "Farrell

Street! That'll be some house! Where'd you get such fancy friends, Leslie?"

As Leslie started to mutter some polite answer, she happened to glance out the window. At the intersection ahead were Bob Stanley and Jerry Gadler, waiting to cross the street. Leslie made a dive for the floor of the car.

"What in tarnation's going on?" Grandpa roared.

"I-I-I dropped something out of my purse," lied Leslie. "I'm just looking for it."

She pretended to search under the seat until the car started up again. Then she opened her purse and closed it with a click. "Found it," she said, sitting back up on the seat.

With a sigh she huddled in the corner again, trying to make herself as small as possible. She closed

her eyes, reliving the scene she'd made with Mom and Dad before they'd left for the convention.

"I'll die. I'll just die!" she could hear herself sobbing. "Why do you have to be away Friday night of all nights? Just when Joan Fenley is having a party."

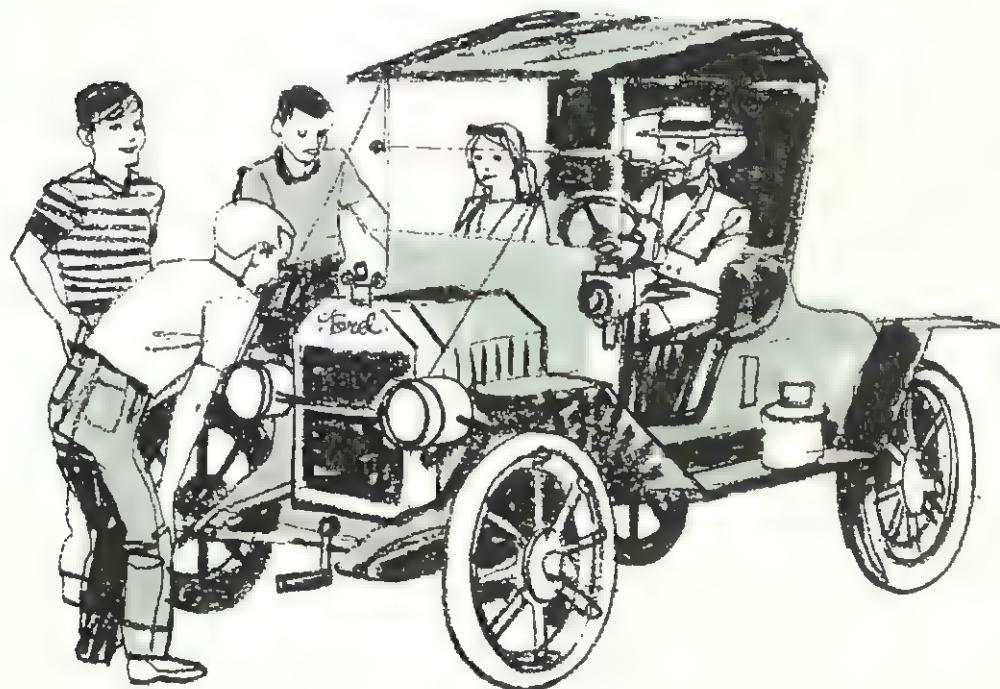
"I don't see why you're making such a ruckus," Dad retorted. "You'll still be here. You'll be able to go."

"No, I won't," Leslie moaned. "How would I get there? None of

the other kids live out this way, so I can't get a ride. And it's too far to walk."

"I'm sure Grandpa will be happy to take you," Mom said soothingly to Leslie.

Leslie's moans rose to a wail. "Oh, Mom, that would be just terrible! Can't you see me arriving at the Fenleys' gorgeous home in Grandpa's old rattletrap of a car. I wouldn't be caught dead riding around in it. Suppose someone saw me in it!" Leslie shuddered.



Dad laughed. "I'll admit the car isn't the latest model, but Grandpa wouldn't trade it for the biggest, shiniest new car available. He's been in love with old Lizzie for years."

"It isn't funny," Leslie blurted out. "I'd be the laughing stock of all my friends if I arrived in that thing."

"Now, listen here, young lady," Dad said sternly. "You'll go in Grandpa's car and be glad of it. That'll be enough of all this nonsense."

"Here we are." Grandpa's voice broke into Leslie's thoughts.

Leslie looked up and, with a sinking feeling in her stomach, saw that the Harmon's car had just pulled up in front of Joan's house, too. Trudy was climbing out of the front seat, and Todd Manken, Stan Howe, and Bill Painter were emerging from the back of the car. They were laughing about something as they started for the front door. Leslie crossed her fingers and hoped that they wouldn't see her in Grandpa's outlandish car.

Leslie's hope was short-lived, however, because at that moment a hotrod roared down the street. The boys spun around to see it

and, at the same time, saw Leslie in Grandpa's car. With a shout they raced back down the walk to the car. Leslie braced herself for the laughter and taunting remarks, promising herself that she wouldn't cry, no matter what.

In a moment the boys were circling the car, exclaiming excitedly. "A Model-A, a real Model-A Ford." "It's the greatest!"

Stan leaned in the window. "Say, Leslie, why didn't you tell us you had a Model-A. Wow, are you lucky! Imagine, being able to ride in an old classic like this!"

"Well, I-I-I . . ." Leslie stuttered in confusion. She still wasn't sure she was hearing right. Why, it sounded as if the boys were actually envious of Grandpa's old car.

"Would you boys like to take a spin in old Lizzie?" Grandpa asked with a grin.

"Would we!" the boys chorused.

"Well, now, we wouldn't want to deprive the pretty ladies at the party of your company." Grandpa winked at the boys. "But I tell you what. When I come to pick Leslie up after the party, I'll take anyone for a ride that wants one."

"Great! Wait until the other guys hear about this!" And the

boys dashed back up the walk, eager to tell their friends of the promised ride in the real Model-A Ford car.

"Have a good time, Leslie," Grandpa said as Leslie opened the car door.

"Oh, I will, *Grandpa, I will.*" Leslie said, her eyes shining. "And thanks for bringing me in your gorgeous old car." She leaned over and kissed her grandfather's cheek, then slid out of the car and followed the others into the house.

1. The whole story takes place during \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. the time it took to get from Leslie's house to the party
  - b. a two-week time period
  - c. a period of several days

1. a
2. The setting for the story is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Joan's house
  - b. grandpa's car
  - c. Leslie's house

2. b
3. Who was riding in the car?
  - a. Grandpa
  - b. Leslie
  - c. Mom
  - d. Dad
  - e. Joan

3. a, b
4. With whom did Leslie talk during the time period covered by the story?
  - a. Mom
  - b. Dad
  - c. Grandpa
  - d. Stan
  - e. Joan

4. c, d
5. Were Mom and Dad present at the time the story deals with?
  - a. yes
  - b. no

5. b
6. How could Mom and Dad be talking in the story if they weren't present?
  - a. Leslie was remembering what they had said at an earlier time.
  - b. Leslie talked to them on the telephone.
  - c. Leslie dreamed that they were there.

6. a

7. Number the following happenings in their correct sequence.

- a. Leslie argued with her parents about not wanting to go to the party in Grandpa's car. 7. a. 1
- b. Grandpa took Leslie to the party. b. 2
- c. The boys saw Grandpa's car and liked it. c. 3
- d. Leslie was happy about riding in Grandpa's car. d. 4

8. For what reason did Leslie lean down to the floor of Grandpa's car?

- a. She was looking for something she had dropped.
- b. She didn't want anyone to know that she was going to a party.
- c. She was embarrassed about riding in an old car and didn't want anyone to see her. 8. c

9. How did the boys act when they saw Grandpa's old Model-A Ford?

- a. They laughed and made taunting remarks about the old car.
- b. They were envious and wanted to take a ride in the old car.
- c. They all said that their grandfathers had old cars too. 9. b

You can keep track of time in the narrative of a story if you pay attention to the words that signal time relationships. Words like *before*, *in a moment*, and *after this* help you to see the sequence of events.

When such words are not included, look for the natural order of events. Then you can understand when the writer changes the natural order to add information or to gain a special effect on the reader. Be on the lookout for flashbacks, too, which bring to the story some events of an earlier time.

The next lesson will review what you have learned.

You will enjoy reading the following selection from Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. The narrative tells of a humorous incident involving Tom, his aunt, and a cat. A passage in the story should give you a clear picture of Tom's aunt. Notice, too, that at the beginning, reference is made to something which happened in the past. Read carefully so that you understand the sequence of events.



### The Cat and the Painkiller

One of the reasons why Tom's mind had drifted away from its secret troubles was that it had found a new and weighty matter to interest itself about. Becky Thatcher had stopped coming to school. Tom had struggled with his pride a few days, and tried to "whistle her down the wind," but failed. He began to find himself hanging

around her father's house nights and feeling very miserable. She was ill. What if she should die! There was distraction in the thought. He no longer took an interest in war, nor even in piracy. The charm of life was gone; there was nothing but dreariness left. He put his hoop away, and his bat; there was no joy in them any more.



His aunt was concerned. She began to try all manner of remedies on him. She was one of those people who are infatuated with patent medicines and all new-fangled methods of producing health or mending it. She was an inveterate experimenter in these things. When something fresh in this line came out she was in a fever, right away, to try it; not on herself, for she was never ailing, but on anybody else that came handy. She was a subscriber to all the "health" periodicals and phrenological frauds; and the solemn ignorance they were inflated with was breath to her nostrils. All the "rot" they contained about ventilation, and how to go to bed, and how to get up, and

what to eat, and what to drink, and how much exercise to take, and what frame of mind to keep oneself in, and what sort of clothing to wear, was all gospel to her, and she never observed that her health journals of the current month customarily upset everything they had recommended the month before. She was as simple-hearted and honest as the day was long, and so she was an easy victim. She gathered together her quack periodicals and quack medicines, and thus armed with death, went about on her pale horse, metaphorically speaking, with "hell following after." But she never suspected that she was not an angel of healing and balm of Gilead in disguise.

The water treatment was new, now, and Tom's low condition was a windfall to her. She had him out at daylight every morning, stood him up in the woodshed, and drowned him with a deluge of cold water; then she scrubbed him down with a towel like a file, and so brought him to; then she rolled him up in a wet sheet and put him away under blankets till she sweated his soul clean and "the yellowish stains of it came through his pores"—as Tom said.

Yet, notwithstanding all this, the boy grew more and more melancholy and pale and dejected. She added hot baths, sitz baths, shower baths, and plunges. The boy remained dismal as a hearse. She began to assist the water with a slim oatmeal diet and blister plasters. She calculated his capacity as she would a jug's, and filled him up every day with quack cure-alls. Tom had become indifferent to persecution by this time. This phase filled the old lady's heart with consternation. This indifference must be broken up at any cost.

Now she heard of Painkiller for the first time. She ordered a lot at once. She tasted it and was filled with gratitude. It was simply fire

in a liquid form. She dropped the water treatment and everything else, and pinned her faith to Painkiller. She gave Tom a teaspoonful and watched with the deepest anxiety for the result. Her troubles were instantly at rest, her soul at peace again; for the "indifference" was broken up. The boy could not have shown a wilder, heartier interest if she had built a fire under him.

Tom felt that it was time to wake up; this sort of life might be romantic enough, in his blighted condition, but it was getting to have too little sentiment and too much distracting variety about it. So he thought over various plans for relief and finally hit upon that of professing to be fond of Painkiller. He asked for it so often that he became a nuisance, and his aunt ended by telling him to help himself and quit bothering her. If it had been Sid, she would have had no misgivings to alloy her delight; but since it was Tom, she watched the bottle clandestinely. She found that the medicine did really diminish, but it did not occur to her that the boy was mending the health of a crack in the sitting-room floor with it.

One day Tom was in the act of dosing the crack when his aunt's yellow cat came along, purring, eyeing the teaspoon avariciously, and begging for a taste. Tom said, "Don't ask for it unless you want it, Peter." Peter wanted it.

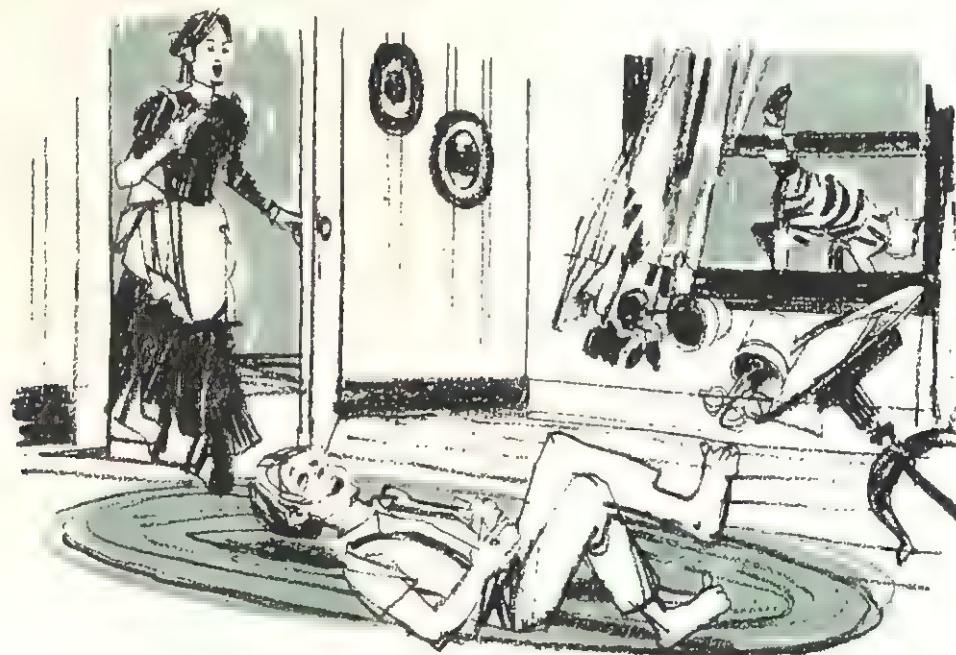
"You better make sure."

Peter was sure.

"Now you've asked for it, and I'll give it to you, because there ain't anything mean about me; but if you find you don't like it, you mustn't blame anybody but your own self."

Peter was agreeable. So Tom pried his mouth open and poured

down the Painkiller. Peter sprang a couple of yards in the air, and then delivered a war whoop and set off round and round the room, banging against furniture, upsetting flowerpots, and making general havoc. Next he rose on his hind feet and pranced around, in a frenzy of enjoyment, with his head over his shoulder and his voice proclaiming his unappeasable happiness. Then he went tearing around the house again spreading chaos and destruction in his path. Aunt Polly entered in time to see him throw a few double somersets, deliver a final



mighty hurrah, and sail through the open window, carrying the rest of the flowerpots with him. The old lady stood petrified with astonishment, peering over her glasses; Tom lay on the floor expiring with laughter.

"Tom, what on earth ails that cat?"

"I don't know, Aunt," gasped the boy.

"Why, I never see anything like it. What did make him act so?"

"'Deed I don't know, Aunt Polly; cats always act so when they're having a good time."

"They do, do they?" There was something in the tone that made Tom apprehensive.

"Yes'm. That is, I believe they do."

"You do?"

"Yes'm."

The old lady was bending down, Tom, watching, with interest emphasized by anxiety. Too late he devined her "drift." The handle of the telltale teaspoon was visible under the bed-valance. Aunt Polly took it, held it up. Tom winced and dropped his eyes. Aunt Polly raised him by the usual handle - his ear—and cracked his head soundly with her thimble.

"Now, sir, what did you want to treat that poor dumb beast so for?"

"I done it out of pity for him—because he hadn't any aunt."

"Hadn't any aunt!—you num-skull. What has that got to do with it?"

"Heaps. Because if he'd 'a' had one she'd 'a' burnt him out herself! She'd 'a' roasted his bowels out of him 'thout any more feeling than if he was a human!"

Aunt Polly felt a sudden pang of remorse. This was putting the thing in a new light; what was cruelty to a cat might be cruelty to a boy, too. She began to soften; she felt sorry. Her eyes watered a little, and she put her hand on Tom's head and said gently:

"I was meaning for the best, Tom. And, Tom, it did do you good."

Tom looked up in her face with just a perceptible twinkle peeping through his gravity.

"I know you was meaning for the best, Auntie, and so was I with Peter. It done him good, too. I never see him get around so since—"

"Oh, go 'long with you, Tom, before you aggravate me again. And you try and see if you can't be a good boy, for once, and you needn't take any more medicine."

## PRACTICE

1. Number the following events in the order in which they happened.

- a. Tom didn't think so much about his troubles or his pleasures.
- b. Becky Thatcher stopped coming to school.
- c. Tom started to go to the Thatcher house at night.
- d. Tom's aunt thought Tom was sick and needed treatment.

1. a. 3

b. 1

c. 2

d. 4

2. Which treatment did the aunt use first to try to cure Tom of his ailments?

- a. She told him how to go to bed and how to get up and what to eat and drink and what to wear.
- b. She dumped cold water on him, dried him briskly with a towel, and then made him sweat.
- c. She gave him teaspoonfuls of Painkiller.

2. b

3. Before she used the Painkiller, what other treatments did she try?

(Choose five.)

- a. a diet of oatmeal
- b. hot baths
- c. shower baths
- d. blister plasters
- e. water treatment
- f. exercises

3. a, b, c, d, e

4. What caused Tom's aunt to leave it up to Tom to take his own doses of the Painkiller?

(Choose two.)

- a. He acted as though he really liked it.
- b. She was too busy with Sid to do it herself.
- c. Tom asked to have some Painkiller so often that it became a nuisance for his aunt to stop to give it to him.
- d. Tom seemed to be getting better.

4. a, c

5. Number the following happenings in correct order.

- a. Tom gave some Painkiller to Peter, the cat.
- b. Aunt Polly was shocked by the cat's behavior.
- c. Tom poured the medicine he was supposed to be taking down a crack in the floor.
- d. Aunt Polly discovered that Tom had given some Painkiller to the cat.
- e. Aunt Polly said that Tom didn't have to take any more of the medicine.
- f. Peter began leaping around the room.

5. a. 2  
b. 4  
c. 1  
d. 5  
e. 6  
f. 3

6. What made Aunt Polly decide that Tom wouldn't have to take any more medicine?

- a. She realized that she had been as cruel to Tom as he had been to the cat.
- b. She didn't want him to give any more of the Painkiller to Peter.
- c. Tom was feeling better and was over his ailment.

6. a

7. What do you know about Aunt Polly?  
(Choose seven.)

- a. She subscribed to all the health magazines.
- b. She tried all the new methods of promoting health.
- c. She was interested in all the new medicines that she read about.
- d. She was a mean woman.
- e. She liked to help her neighbors when they were sick.
- f. She tried the new remedies on herself.
- g. She was a healthy woman.
- h. She was a well-meaning person.
- i. She was honest herself and so believed what other people said and what she read.

7. a, b, c, e,  
g, h, i

8. What type of writing does the author use in this selection?

- a. narrative writing because it tells a sequence of events
- b. expository writing about remedies and new methods of treating diseases
- c. descriptive writing about Tom's strange illness

8. ■

9. Number the following happenings in correct order.

- a. Tom told Peter not to ask for the medicine unless he really wanted it.
- b. Peter, the yellow cat, begged Tom for a taste of Painkiller.
- c. Peter, the yellow cat, was sure that he wanted to taste the Painkiller.
- d. Tom pried Peter's mouth open and poured down the Painkiller.
- e. Peter leaped out the open window, carrying flowerpots after him.

9. a. 2

b. 1

c. 3

d. 4

e. 5

10. Which of the following statements best describes Tom as he is revealed in this story?

- a. Tom was cruel and deceitful when he said he didn't know what was wrong with the cat.
- b. A mischievous and clever boy, Tom knew that his aunt really meant to help him, not hurt him, by giving him Painkiller.
- c. Tom was so sad when Becky Thatcher was sick that he became sick himself.

10. b

Now you have proved to yourself what you know about people and events in material you read. Every story you read has some characters and some events. These are what make it a story. To appreciate a story to the fullest, keep in your mind the characters and events as they are presented.

Here are three paragraphs that you have read before. Look at them again to see what kind of writing they represent.

(A) The sun-drenched beach seemed deserted, haunted only by the shadows of clouds that danced merrily in the sky overhead. Except for the rustling of palm trees and the lapping of waves against the coral reefs, you could almost hear a pin drop. From out of the dense tropical vegetation, a fawnlike creature came to lap from a small pool of water. Henry rested the oars in his lap and watched in complete fascination.

(B) "Hank, old boy," he said to himself, "who'd ever have thought you'd have a whole island all to yourself for a month?" He thought back over the sequence of events that had brought him to this spot today. When was it that his interest in weather had really begun? Was it in elementary school when he learned the names of various cloud formations? Or was it later when he and his science class built and kept their own weather station? No! It began much earlier. Before

he had even begun to go to school, Henry had loved to watch the changing sky and look for faces and shapes among the cloud formations. On through high school and college his interest had grown and his knowledge increased. He remembered how proud he was to have served two years in the Army's Meteorologic Department. Finally, though, he remembered the telegram that had arrived just a few short weeks before, announcing the approval and financing of his island expedition to study the nature of cloud formations over large bodies of water.

(C) Overhead, clouds filled the sky. They were cirro-cumulus clouds —those small, white, rounded masses that are made up entirely of ice crystals because they float at such high altitudes. These cloud formations are often called a mackerel sky because they make designs very similar to the scaly skin of a mackerel.

1. Choose the paragraph that is an example of expository writing (because it tells certain facts about a topic but these facts do not depend on any time sequence).
  - a. Paragraph A
  - b. Paragraph B
  - c. Paragraph C
  - d. none of these
2. Paragraph A is an example of \_\_\_\_\_ writing.
  - a. narrative
  - b. expository
  - c. descriptive
  - d. none of these
3. Narrative writing \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. describes the setting in which the action takes place
  - b. tells a story about a sequence of events
  - c. exposes the facts
4. Below are some statements that show the sequence of events that led Henry to his desert island. Arrange these statements in the order in which they actually occurred in Henry's life. Use only those statements which are actually related in the story.
  - a. Henry was always a lovable child.
  - b. He served in the Army's Meteorological Department.
  - c. He was a Boy Scout.
  - d. He had a weather station in junior high school.
  - e. He came to the island by boat.
  - f. He received a telegram approving the trip.
  - g. Before he started school, he used to look for cloud shapes.
  - h. He saw the cirro-cumulus clouds right away.
  - i. His interest grew in high school and college.

5. One period in the time sequence was omitted. It was \_\_\_\_\_.

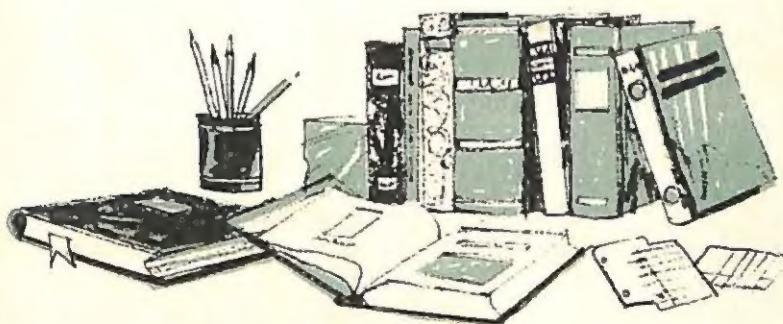
- before he was in school
- when he was in elementary school
- when he was in junior high
- when he was in the Army

6. Which of the following terms gives you a clue to the *climate* of Henry's island?

|                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| a. deserted beach     | b. cloud shadows       |
| c. rustling trees     | d. lapping waves       |
| e. coral reefs        | f. tropical vegetation |
| g. fawn-like creature | h. small pool          |

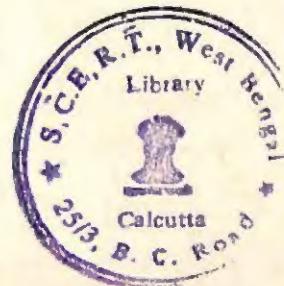
7. Can a passage be both descriptive and narrative at the same time?

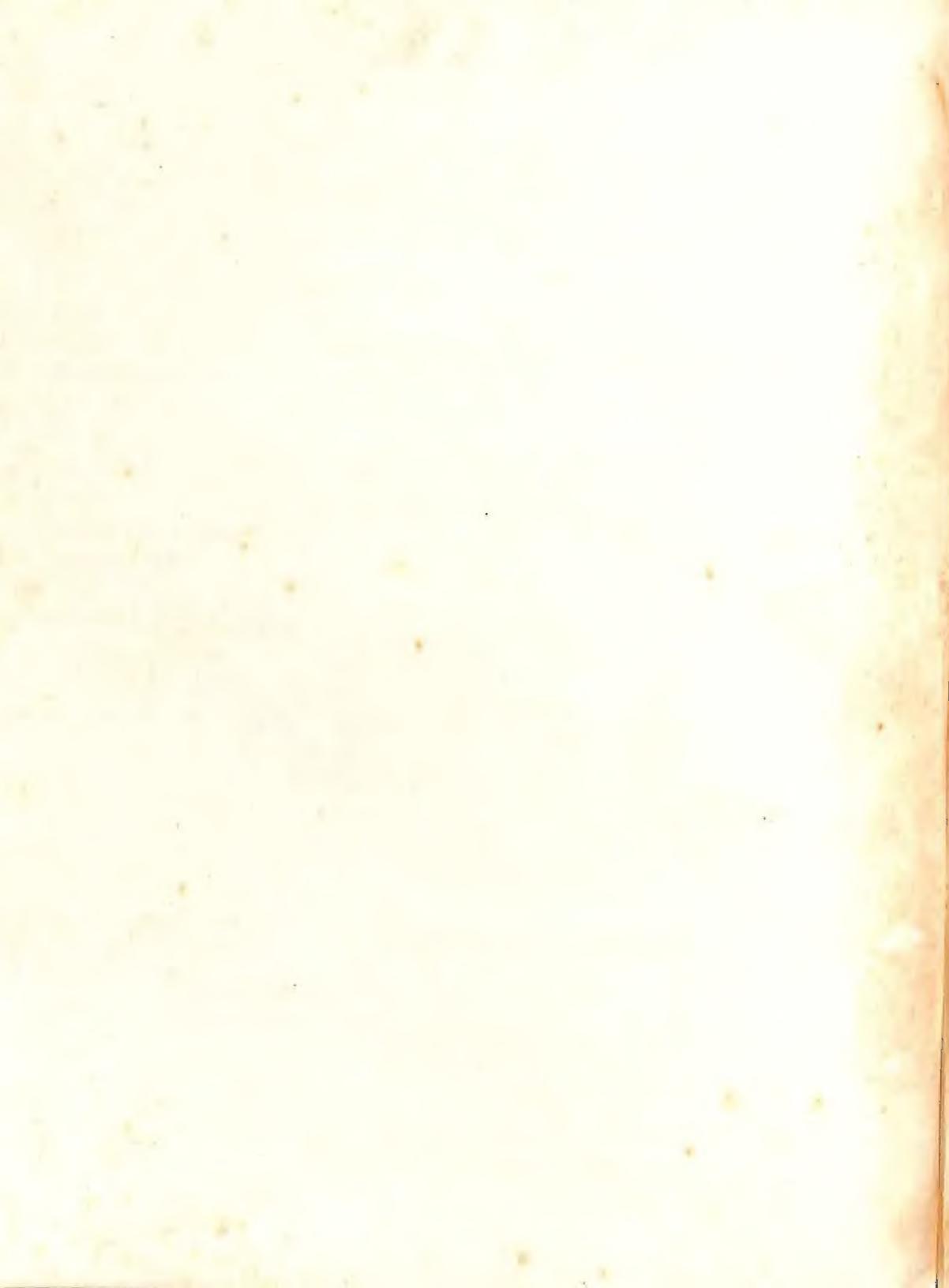
- yes
- no



Reviewing Skills

|      |         |      |
|------|---------|------|
| 1. c | 4. g. 1 | 5. c |
| 2. c | d. 2    | 6. f |
| 3. b | i. 3    | 7. a |
|      | b. 4    |      |
|      | f. 5    |      |





## ABOUT THIS BOOK

**THE MACMILLAN READING SPECTRUM** is a complex of instructional materials designed to help individualize reading instruction in the intermediate grades. The coverage of skills is complete and the development is sequential. The SPECTRUM provides a plan for a full reading program and may be used with or without basal readers. The books require a minimum of teacher direction; each pupil can work toward improving his own reading ability.

The goal of the Reading Comprehension booklets is to improve the child's ability to comprehend and enjoy what he reads. Beginning with simple sentences and progressing to sentences working together in paragraphs, the pupil sees the relationships among words and among sentences that make reading easier for him.

This book is divided into seven major blocks of material:

**1. Pages 1-36 Getting the Meaning Through Context**

The pupil learns how we get meaning through context—in a sentence, an expository paragraph, or a longer expository passage.

**2. Pages 37-49 Relating Details to Main Ideas**

This section helps the pupil to distinguish between the main idea and details that illustrate or explain the main idea.

**3. Pages 50-80 Seeing the Order of Events and Ideas**

The pupil learns to follow the sequence of events, of ideas, of steps in a process, of cause and effect.

**4. Pages 81-94 Interpreting Facts and Specific Ideas**

Specific facts and ideas add meaning to a general idea by giving information and examples.

**5. Pages 95-118 Implied Meaning**

Through stories and articles the pupil gains practice in reaching a conclusion, making a generalization, and in seeing the underlying meaning in what he reads.

**6. Pages 119-134 Expository, Narrative, and Descriptive Writing**

This section gives the pupil the opportunity to interpret the general ideas in expository, narrative, and descriptive writing.

**7. Pages 135-160 Reading in Mathematics and Social Studies**

The pupil applies to reading in mathematics and social studies the techniques of looking for main ideas, following the sequence of ideas, and related skills.

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